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BOOKS AND WORLD PEACE *By Vera Brittain*

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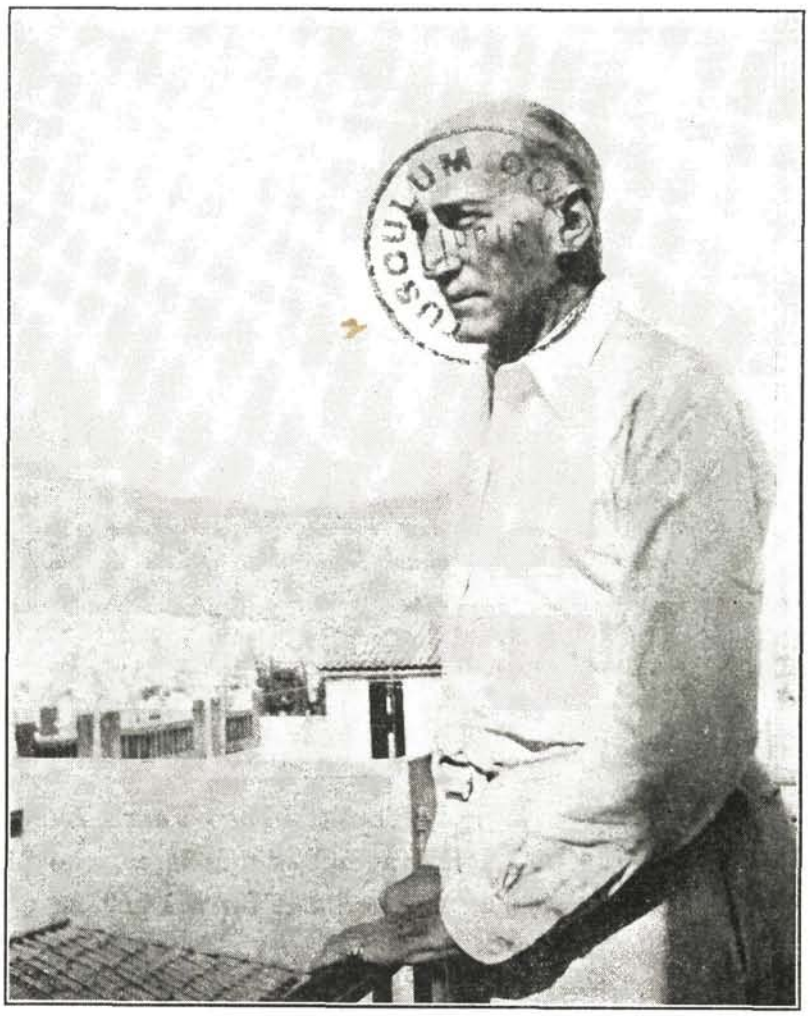

C. P. RODOCANACHI

"The desire for cool excitement, and for money as the only serviceable key to it, is what binds this exhilarating book into the American spirit"...

(See page 5)

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To Greet the New Year:

A Distinguished "Self Portrait"—

Letters to a Friend

By WINIFRED HOLTBY

When Winifred Holtby died in 1935, just after she had completed "South Riding," England lost one of her finest novelists.

These letters, covering the period from 1920 to 1926, were written to a friend in South Africa. They comprise not only a reflection of Miss Holtby's vivid personality, the freshness and spontaneity of her writing, but also an intimate view of affairs in the disturbed post-war years. $3.50

A New Detective Thriller—

The Embarrassed Murderer

By GAIL STOCKWELL

Sally Toplitt's New Year's Eve party included as a guest a fiendishly ingenious murderer who planned long ahead to make that affair the basis for his perfect crime.

A fine sense of plot makes this mystery a real puzzler. There are plenty of suspects and, as in her recent "Death by Invitation," Miss Stockwell carefully eschews coincidental or providential clues in building the surprise denouement. $2.00

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Books and World Peace

BY VERA BRITTAIN

IN the midst of the great American depression, there was a story current in England concerning a contemporary visit of the famous British economist, Mr. John Maynard Keynes, to the United States. The first reporter who met him at the docks put a leading and significant question.

"Can you tell us, Mr. Keynes, from your great knowledge of history, whether there has ever been a parallel to the present depression, and if so, how long it lasted?"

Mr. Keynes reflected for a moment, and then replied: "Yes, there was one. It was called the Dark Ages, and it lasted for five hundred years."

To many of us, the present moment seems nearer to a new Dark Age than the lowest point of the depression. With war reducing Spain and a large part of China to barbarism, with heavy rearmament programs being carried out by the United States, England, France, and Russia in response to the ever-rising tide of fascism, it is not astonishing to find the hearts of all but the very young "failing them for fear." I doubt whether an American can fully realize the heaviness of apprehension which hangs over Europe today. Must we, who lost our fathers and brothers in one war, lose our sons and daughters in another? The dark uncertainty of the answer to that question undermines every project and impedes every plan.

Pinchot

VERA BRITTAIN

In a confused world full of bewildered individuals looking desperately around for salvation, one source of hope should surely lie in the writers and thinkers whose business it is to stand above contemporary conflicts, and keep sane when others lose their heads. Needless to say, it is not an infallible source. Ten years ago the French critic, M. Julien Benda, complained in his diatribe "La Trahisons des Clercs" that many modern authors pander to the grossest weaknesses of the public mind by "adopting political passions," by going down into the arena and taking sides instead of remaining objective and detached. Only within recent months, the violently partisan attitude of several non-Spanish writers in the Spanish war has recalled a dictum of the late George Saintsbury: "It may not be easy to preserve the critical attitude when you love; that attitude is gone, without hope of recovery, as soon as you hate."

When civilization has developed to a stage in which its very purpose and existence is threatened by the type of warfare that it produces, the literary partisan plays a suicidal role. In the long centuries of slow rebuilding which followed the downfall of the Roman Empire, literature and art were forced to take refuge in the monasteries. It is doubtful whether the unutterable chaos likely to be produced by another "war to end war" would permit the survival of any such cultural oases. The grave possibility of complete annihilation seems to suggest that the task of modern literature, if only in the interests of its own existence, is to emphasize and develop any tendency or philosophy which creates an atmosphere of peace and makes war less probable.

Although this function of literature was never so urgent in the past as it has become today, it has been carried out, consciously or unconsciously, by some of the greatest writers of all the ages. Among the earliest were those who, like the Hebrew prophets, drew for their readers the picture of an ideal civilization in which the passions of war had been eliminated by the arts of peace. One of the noblest contributions ever made to the idea of international unity was the conception of a Messiah who, as the Prince of Peace, "shall judge between the nations and shall reprove many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more." This notion of a sovereign who should be preëminently a peace-maker was not confined to the Hebrew writers. Virgil's Fourth Eclogue, with its prophecy of a wonderful child and an era of peace, contains language reminiscent of Isaiah and Micah, though it displays less confidence in the perfectibility of human nature:

> Still shall some ancient evil live in men,
> To make them strive for gain, build high their walls,
> And take delight in spears and sharpened swords,
> Before they beat them into pruning hooks.

The ideal of one rule, of unity in one God, of "the promise of an active and splendid peace and happiness in human affairs," has at least remained within the intellectual consciousness of mankind, even though this unhappy present seems farther removed from its realization than the warring "nations" of Isaiah's circumscribed universe. St. Augustine, in his "Civitate Dei," provided a starting point for all medieval speculation on the world-state, and nearly a thousand years later

Next Week

TRANSGRESSOR IN THE TROPICS
By NEGLEY FARSON
Reviewed by Louis J. Halle, Jr.

PROMETHEUS AND THE BOLSHEVIKS
By JOHN LEHMANN
Reviewed by Eugene Lyons

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Dante, in his "De Monarchia," laid upon some ideal emperor of the future the duty of acting as supreme peace-maker. Yet another six hundred years onwards, Tennyson's remarkable prophecy in "Locksley Hall" of "the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World," showed that the ideal of organized world peace still lived to provide a persistent if constantly defeated opposition to the schemes of the war mongers.

Far nearer to the twentieth century spirit of resolute fact-facing by the victims of military cliques are the poets and dramatists whose work reveals the pity and horror of conquest, "when the thrill of battle is over, and nothing remains but to wait and think." In "The Trojan Women" of Euripides, which so poignantly presents the helpless victims of Troy ravished, murdered, or sold into slavery, the literature of Greece sets before us the great prototype of all dramatic anti-war realism, whatever its form. Professor Gilbert Murray describes it as the first great expression in European literature "of the spirit of pity for mankind exalted into a moving principle."

But it did not please the Athenian war party. After its production Euripides lived in a deepening atmosphere of hatred and strife, until at last, "because almost all in Athens rejoiced at his suffering," he banished himself to the remote valleys of Macedon, to write the "Bacchae" and to die. Perhaps some of the exiled anti-war writers of Germany—Erich Maria Remarque, Ludwig Renn, Arnold and Stefan Zweig—may take some measure of comfort from the fact that Euripides is likely to survive until the twilight of civilization, whereas, except by historical specialists, the very names of the Athenian war party members are forgotten.

It is difficult to estimate how far Euripides has directly influenced the literature of the Great War and particularly the few books dealing with its effect upon women, but many examples of nineteenth and twentieth century literature appear closer to him in temper than the work of the centuries which divide the Greeks from ourselves. Shelley's "Revolt of Islam" and Byron's "Childe Harold" contain not dissimilar descriptive passages dwelling upon the horror of war. Tolstoy's "War and Peace"—which has been described as the greatest novel so far produced in the literature of the world—carries on the same tradition, building upon the foundation of the author's own experience in the Crimea its gigantic picture in time and space of the Napoleonic Wars. During the period of peace-idealism which produced the first Hague Conference, another cry of protest against war came from Germany in the form of a once famous but too long neglected novel, Berta von Süttner's "Die Waffen Nieder" ("Lay Down Your Arms"), published in 1897, and recently revived in an English translation. Thomas Hardy's "The Dynasts," in which the Napoleonic Wars were again used as the basis of a long series of dramatic episodes, followed in 1904. This great epic drama, which represents Napoleon as the callous embodiment of evil, expresses the same spirit of indignant pity as "The Trojan Women." War, though bringing glory to the rulers, is shown as causing bitter misery to the ruled. For Hardy the only hope of a peaceful civilization lay in the gradual realization of the truth by the betrayed peoples of the warring nations. After showing the aftermath of Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig, he puts into the mouth of the Spirit of the Pities three lines which might well describe, not the forlorn victims of Napoleon's armies, but the bewildered democracies of 1937:

> Yet is it but Napoleon who has failed.
> The pale pathetic peoples still plod on
> From hoodwinking to light.

Only ten years after Hardy's play was published, the hoodwinkers again triumphed, and a war which was fought to smash German militarism and make the world safe for democracy ended instead by smashing German democracy and making the world safe for militarism.

There are some anti-war writers—Mr. J. B. Priestley among them—who contend that the advocates of peace adopt too serious an attitude, and would combat war more effectively by ridicule than by realistic dramatization or sustained argument. A man who fought through four years of war and spent his twenty-first birthday in the trenches is entitled to this view, which is supported by numerous classic examples throughout the history of literature. The "debunkers" of war provide names no less famous than those of Aristophanes, in "Lysistrata," Cervantes, in "Don Quixote," and Shakespeare, whose "Troilus and Cressida" gives a bitter, satirical presentation of the Trojan tragedy very different from that of Euripides. More modern exponents of the same method include Swift in "Gulliver's Travels" and Byron in several of the more disreputable cantos of "Don Juan." One of the most respectable runs as follows:

> Cockneys of London, Muscadins of Paris,
> Just ponder what a pious pastime War is!
> Think how the joys of reading a gazette
> Are purchased by all agonies and crimes,
> Or if these do not move you, don't forget
> Such doom may be your own in after times.

A final historic group of writers, hardly to be described as makers of literature but substantially important in maintaining the influence of the pen against what was then correctly described as "the sword," include the legal-minded, conscious planners of peace whose work laid the foundations of international law, and thus began to define the only authority which attempted to fill the gap left by the second and final disappearance of Rome as universal arbiter.

One of the first of the legalistic peace-planners was Sully, Minister of Henry IV of France, whose seventeenth century "Grand Design" suggested the division of Europe into fifteen Federal States. The French philosopher, Emeric Crucé, a contemporary of Sully, went so far as to propose the union of the whole world at a Council held in Venice in 1623. Far more important than either of these visionaries was the Dutch jurist, Hugo Grotius, whose "De Jure Belli et Pacis" ("The Right of War and Peace"), published in 1625, is generally regarded as the pioneer work upon which the science of international law has subsequently been built. Grotius recorded that he was impelled to write his book owing to the horror inspired in him by the Thirty Years' War, which halved the population of Germany and retarded the development of Central Europe for a hundred years.

Throughout the eighteenth century, schemes for peace invariably accompanied or followed the ravages of war. William Penn, in his "Essay Towards the Peace of Europe" (1693), proposed that the sovereigns of the countries whose Grand Alliance was creating havoc over half a continent should unite in forming an "Imperial Assembly." When this war was concluded by the Treaty of Utrecht, the Abbé de St. Pierre produced his "Projet

(*Continued on page* 16)

Feast

By Frances Frost

O YOU so long fed
by the root of hunger,
you so long nourished
by the bleak stem of want,

be not betrayed
by the semblance of feasting.
The firmness of apples
may bruise at a touch.

The sweetness of grapes—
cool flesh and tight color—
may sour and tarnish,
may poison the tongue.

Be not deceived
by the summoning music:
the bread is disaster,
the promise is false.

Rather live lean:
though your fare be meagre,
with starvation your lover,
eat of your heart.

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A Greek Who Made Good

FOREVER ULYSSES. By C. P. Rodocanachi. New York: The Viking Press. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE WELLER

IT is deference to the Anglo-Saxon which causes America, where movie scripts about John Paul Jones lie gathering dust on studio shelves because they would offend the English of England, to look down the nose upon all who come from the eastern Mediterranean. The Mediterraneans are greasy, they are untrustworthy, and along the lifeline of empire they are querulous, frequently disorderly bystanders.

A book like "Forever Ulysses," a sparkling novel of a predatory intellect, was needed to show Americans that what may be true for the rest of the Near East is not true for Greece or the modern Greek. Omit the cult of domesticity and marriage from the American hero, while retaining that of democracy, and you have something pretty close to this Ulysses of today, this merchant, middleman, and fixer, who pursues money mainly because that is the hottest contest the world affords him, and finds the subtle struggle between acquisitive men sweeter than any other. The educated or international modern Greek is more kin to the American than to the Englishman, Frenchman, German, or Italian; spiritually he has transcended his narrow borders as the new American now begins to transcend his greater ones.

This Ulysses of Constantine Rodocanachi, destined to become great through becoming wealthy, was born in the island of Kephalonia, whose first syllable, meaning "head," indicates the most able limb of its citizens. Like Ithaca of the early Ulysses, Kephalonia is one of the Ionian Islands, but Ithaca has not given a name to Greece in centuries, while Kephalonia is the native place, to select a name practically at random, of Greece's present dictator, General John Metaxas.

Ulysses was a shoeblack in Athens, from there he sailed with the sponge fleet into the southern Aegean, knew Egypt, became rich in Africa, lost all he had, came to the United States and won it all back again in tobacco, tried armaments and was good at that, too, financed Greece, enjoyed the privilege which lifts the Greek into heaven—besting and then kidding the British—and finally, there being no paradise superior to this on earth, uninterested in any beyond it, he died and returned to Kephalonia. Ulysses is all the Greeks who have gone forth poor and come back rich, and this conforms with truth, in a way, for in Greece the Kephalonian success stories outnumber the Kephalonians.

The desire for cool excitement, and for money as the only serviceable key to it, is what binds this exhilarating book into the American spirit. Ulysses is truly sophisticated, in that he has cast off all animal appetites that are chains, yet there is no deadness or inertia in him, only the health of a rubber ball. Unlike Zaharoff (with whom he will be compared), Ulysses never loved a woman, like other Levantines he cheerfully whined his way to success where other methods failed, he played all games to amuse himself, and in his story's perfect ultimate tribute "profited by them all."

The novel is full of overstatement, besides being an overstatement of the capacities of any one man. But it is never fantasy; one cannot imagine fantasy in which the point is, as it always was with Ulysses, to find somebody ungypped and gyp him.

Possibly "Forever Ulysses" will be judged in part by the author's United States, so Greek that it seems to show that he has never been here; this would be unfortunate. His United States merely shows how he would rook Americans if he were Ulysses, and how he would make them like it. He can make them like it even in this bookish form. In his very wildness Rodocanachi is precise, and he abounds in lyrical passages. Unlike his hero, he gives the customer plenty for his money; the story is prodigally generous.

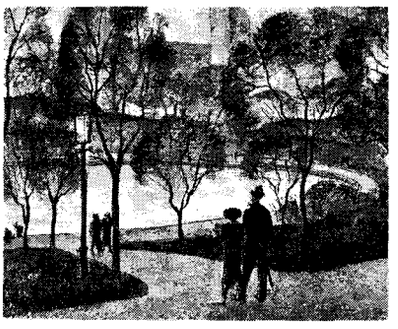
George Weller, author of "Not to Eat, Not for Love," was for some time the New York Times *correspondent in Greece.* *See page 22 for biographical note on C. P. Rodocanachi.*

Love out of Season

WINTER IN APRIL. By Robert Nathan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1938. $2.

Reviewed by WILLIAM MAXWELL

THIS novel is unlike any of Mr. Nathan's previous books in theme, yet if it had been published anonymously, there could still have been no doubt about its authorship. It has the simplicity of style and form which are now expected of him, the humor, and the poetic feeling. It is also like all the others, a *tour de force,* for probably never before has a novelist devoted himself exclusively to the problems of love and dancing school.



From the jacket of "Winter in April."

This rather slender story is told in the present tense and in the first person singular by Mr. Pettifer. An old man, looking back on half a century of failure and success in the realm of polite letters, he has come to doubt whether there is any emotion that cannot be alleviated in some measure by a glass of hot milk. Even his work does not seriously interfere with what he most enjoys doing—with his observations on the state of his granddaughter Ellen's mind and heart. While the action is taking place, he comments on it like a Greek chorus.

Ellen is fifteen, of an age for playing a portable victrola, for studying plane geometry, and for misspelling the word "desperate." Under happier circumstances she might not have had to deal with love until she was much older. She might instead have gone to the Christmas dance, in a dress without any sleeves to it, and taken her place in the sun. Unfortunately Mr. Pettifer is prevailed upon to take into the house as his secretary a young German exile, a doctor of philosophy from Heidelberg and Oxford.

Offhand one might think that the love of a charming but essentially callow fifteen-year-old girl for a man twice her age has less emotional content than almost any situation Mr. Nathan might have hit upon. Not only that, it has been done in books before, by one novelist or another, with detachment or humor or delicacy. Mr. Nathan handles it with all three and —for the first time, I think—as a matter of grave concern. Under his examination it unquestionably is.

Though Ellen's interests are young and extremely narrow, excluding every other awareness but love, Mr. Pettifer's are universal. In his function of commentator and chorus, he considers the years, the changing seasons, the very doubtful condition of the world today, so that the story which Mr. Nathan has to tell does not seem isolated, and is not trivial. If his conclusion has dignity but almost no hope, it may be observed that, according to the *New York Times,* we have just passed through the most extensive Christmas celebration in years; one marked here and there throughout the country by gunfire, hanging, suffocation, burning, drowning, poisoning, and general homicide. And that during the holiday season, "at least fourteen men and women died in despair by their own hands."

See page 22 for biographical note on Robert Nathan.

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A CROQUET PARTY IN THE SIXTIES

Crinoline and Croquet

VICTORIAN PANORAMA. By Peter Quennell. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1937. $3.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN IN VICTORIAN FICTION. By E. M. Delafield. New York: Harper & Bros. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

THE age of crinoline and croquet, of tyrannical fathers and sentimental lovers, of docile children and exacting governesses, the Victorian epoch so out of fashion as a manner of living and so completely the fashion as a subject for description, wears an endearing, if sometimes amusing, aspect in these volumes. Mr. Quennell's book presents a survey of life and manners from contemporary photographs and wears the quaint appearance which the family album, with its belles and beaux in the outmoded clothes of a bygone day, always produces. But for all its entertaining nature it is a serious attempt to project the period as one not only serene in the belief in its own greatness but awake to new and disturbing trains of thought and pressing problems. The running commentary which accompanies the well-chosen pictures passes in rapid review varied aspects of the Victorian scene, dealing skillfully and discriminatingly with family life, with low life, the stage, fashion and taste, the London of costermongers and riverdredgers, of ample, ugly houses, cellar restaurants, with that culminating glory of the period, the Great Exhibition of 1851, and with certain of the outstanding personalities of the time.

Miss Delafield's book is an anthology of excerpts from the minor Victorian novelists and writers for children designed to give a record of the Victorian domestic scene. Its quotations are strung together on a slight thread of commentary which points their content, and highly entertaining they are. Here are parents and children, spinster aunts and indulgent uncles, young girls just arriving at womanhood, lovers, husbands exerting a majestical superiority over admiring wives, young ladies indulging in tears and swoons, adolescents coming down with brain fever as a result of disappointment, elders and youngsters engaging in blind man's buff, puss-in-the-corner, and charades, dancing the waltz under protest from the conventional, and all of them feeling and declaring their feelings with a sentimentality foreign to the present day. Miss Delafield relies in the main on Charlotte M. Yonge for her excerpts, but she quotes, too, from such other favorites of Victorian times as Elizabeth Wetherell, Mrs. Henry Wood, and Rhoda Broughton. Dipped into anywhere her book is sure to afford amusement, but read as a whole it, like Mr. Quennell's volume, helps to recreate a period.

LEICESTER SQUARE IN 1883: *From "Victorian Panorama."*

Cromwell as Dictator

OLIVER CROMWELL: A DICATOR'S TRAGEDY. By Mary Taylor Blauvelt. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by WILBUR CORTEZ ABBOTT

IF one were superstitious about such things, one might think from the number of books which have lately appeared about Cromwell that we were at the beginning or even in the midst of a revolution, for such periods have always been rich in Cromwell literature. It was so before 1789 and between 1789 and 1815. It was so in all the revolutionary periods of the nineteenth century, and it is even said—though on what authority it is hard to discover—that Carlyle's Cromwell has been extremely popular in Russia since about 1900, especially immediately before 1917. If there is anything in omens, then, what of the fact that within two years there have appeared no less than six books in English about the great Protector?

One says advisedly "about the Protector" for not all of them have been in any strict sense biographies, least of all biographies which seek to discover new materials which might illuminate his character and career. Most of them, in fact, have been rather new "appreciations" adapted to this generation, some, like Professor Barker's interesting and suggestive essay, frankly so; some—we name no names—mere "propaganda" for this view or that of Cromwell and the modern world. Miss Blauvelt's book lies, as it were, somewhere between. It is, as the author frankly and truly says, "not a life." Nor could that be expected from a work which, as she says again frankly and truly, pays "very little attention to either military or foreign affairs"; the sub-title "A Dictator's Tragedy," reveals what may be called the subjective character of the book. Its aim is chiefly to interpret Cromwell as a man who, devoted to the cause of parliamentary government and religious liberty, was driven by the force of circumstances into dictatorship—"his life a tragedy of conflicting ideals, his career a successful failure."

The thesis is not wholly new; it may not be wholly true; but Miss Blauvelt has ranged herself on the side of the angels as unreservedly as Mr. Belloc has taken the other side. She has written an entertaining and persuasive book which will be deservedly popular, especially among those who are prepared to be convinced. She shows an extraordinarily wide acquaintance with the utterances of the Protector, which she quotes with great effect to prove his single-hearted devotion to his principles. She writes—despite some lapses—in a style which carries the reader on; and she has produced a book which will undoubtedly have many readers. Yet it has often been noted that by a careful selection of the evidence it is as

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easy to prove that Cromwell was a single-minded, pure-hearted, unselfish, heroic defender of liberty as that he was a hypocritical, ambitious, crafty, and unscrupulous opportunist—and both have been done.

Human nature and affairs are not as clear-cut as that. Few men—and Cromwell least of all—are all black or all white. One may give him credit for seeking the best course, yet admit that many things he did were indefensible; one may argue that he was a hypocrite and a self-seeker, yet agree that some things he did were good.

It is better to face the facts, however unpalatable, and admit that there is something to be said on either side, that the Puritans and their leader were not so entirely beyond reproach and the great majority of the English people were not so entirely wrong, and that, whatever Cromwell's words, sometimes his acts spoke even louder than his rhetoric.

Wilbur C. Abbott is professor of history at Harvard University.

A Novelist's Letters

LETTERS TO A FRIEND. By Winifred Holtby. Edited by Alice Holtby and Jean McWilliam. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1938. $3.50.

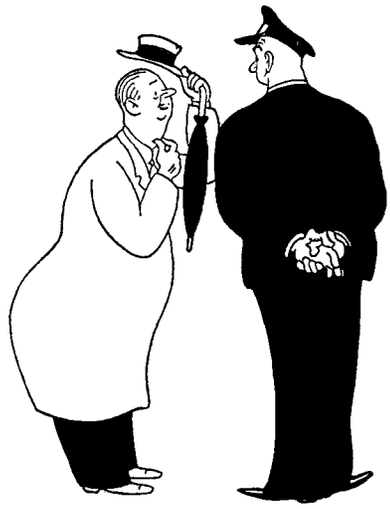
READERS of Vera Brittain's "Testament of Youth" who came to feel almost a sense of intimacy with the friend who figured so constantly in its pages, and of Miss Holtby's own novels which in the last, "South Riding," seemed to be reaching a rich maturity, will turn with interest to this volume of her letters. The greater part of them were written between the years 1920 and 1926, a few within the next nine years, and the last in June, 1935. They were addressed to Miss McWilliam with whom Winifred Holtby had worked in the closest association in a W.A.A.C. camp in France during the war and for whom her friendship continued undiminished after it. The correspondence varies in interest, deepening in intensity as the years go on and its writer gains in experience and expands her contacts and occupations. The early letters are full of small incidents of daily life with the emotion of the war years ever and again throbbing through their chatter; the later ones, while still much concerned with small events and happenings, show a mind deeply engrossed by the pressing problems of the day as they were brought to Miss Holtby's notice through her work on the League of Nations. Winifred Holtby loved life and people; she delighted in nature and the out-of-doors, read widely and well, and traveled considerably. Her correspondence is lively and colorful, shot through with charming descriptions of places, apt characterizations of books, and affectionate gossip of friends and relatives. It reveals a ruminative mind and a rich nature, altogether a personality of distinction.

Benchley's Desperate Remedy

AFTER 1903—WHAT? By Robert Benchley. Illustrated by Gluyas Williams. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

I REMEMBER my old friend Irving Telemouse (he gives you an awfully good shine for five cents over on Eighth Avenue) once posing (or popping) the question as to whether Robert Xavier Benchley might really be regarded as a "tendential" writer. (That was after we had a couple of beers together at Max's on the corner.) In replying to him I experienced some difficulty in pronouncing the word "tendential" and finally gave the whole thing up with a slightly embarrassed laugh. But the question of exactly what constitutes Mr. Benchley's significance in what we too lightly term our modern world, must remain to haunt and baffle those hungry generations that are now so rapidly treading us down. That is the thought for this week.



DRAWING BY GLUYAS WILLIAMS
From "After 1903—What?"

The man seems to be a humorist, and yet the Pagliacci undertones are seldom absent. Dr. Foster Kennedy has recently pointed out that among neurologists it is "pretty well determined that the hypothalmus, a portion of the mid-brain, controls the moods of human beings." My personal conviction is that Robert Grosvenor Benchley possesses no mid-brain, but a highly developed spinal cortex which reverses the function of the hypothalmus, thus leaving the man a positive victim of uncontrollable moods. He's moody. But he's not sankey.

Well, he's a little bit sankey, at that. Generalizations about Benchley are dangerous. He's really very funny, too, in the talkies.

The result of all this—in case you actually wish me to get anywhere in this review—has been something-or-other *scribendi*, and its fruits eight or nine books which, to me, make more sense than Gertrude Stein; though that, of course, is a matter of opinion.

"Has Benchley a method?" is another question that has often bogged down the savants. To this I can confidently reply, "No." As to the anagrams, hidden acrostics, paranomasia (play upon words), or even paranomia (incorrect naming of objects) concealed in his writings, I am not so positive. But surely spontaneity is the key to his particular form of mental disorder. The man is spontaneously cuckoo.

Still, I have never noted in him a characteristic two-syllable whistle.

Still, he says some pretty acute things —about the chromosome and gene racket, for instance.

I have said that Benchley seems to be a humorist, and right now, in order to give Bob a break, I want to retract that "seems." Maybe "humorist" isn't the right word either. All I know is, he makes you laugh. It is therefore especially interesting in this new treatise of his to find him trying to get the matter of "Why We Laugh" settled with Max Eastman. "All laughter," he says, "is merely a compensatory reflex to take the place of sneezing. What we really want to do is sneeze, but as that is not always possible, we laugh instead. Sometimes we underestimate our powers and laugh and sneeze at the same time. This raises hell all around." I really think he has got hold of something there.

He has some good suggestions also for our Treasury Department, in the matter of questions they might ask us on income tax blanks, because the French go much farther than we do in such matters. (They ask, for instance, "For what period last year did you have an airship at your disposal?") I like some of Benchley's suggestions:

4. Was that your wife that you were with in Chicago on February 10th?
5. How did your wife happen to be going to Chicago with you?
6. Turn around and let's see your hair-cut. Who cut it last, for Heaven's sake?
7. Is that your own hat? If so, what were you thinking of?
8. What is your *real* name?
9. We said—what is your *real* name?
10. Aren't you ashamed of yourself?

At a time when all issues are rather confused there has emerged in the person of Benchley one of the finest little issue-confusers current. In fact, the man looms pretty large today. He may loom larger and larger as time goes on. Perhaps he ought to go on a diet?

This is the tenth—now I've actually counted them—of Bob Benchley's books. It's swell.

See page 22 for biographical note on Robert C. Benchley.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Shallow Waters

AT the meeting of the Modern Language Association in Chicago last week, Mr. Alexander Cowie, who frequently contributes to these pages, read an excellent paper on the female novelists of the middle decades of the last century. We liked it better than any other paper we heard (except a report by another contributor of ours, Howard Mumford Jones, on some idiocies of the National Council of Teachers of English, which we'll tell you about later on). It described the methods, characters, situations, conventions, and clichés which enabled such writers as Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth, Augusta Evans, and Mary Jane Holmes to command audiences of half a million or more. It mentioned one "special edition" of "St. Elmo" that was limited to one hundred thousand copies. It analyzed very acutely the books these ladies wrote and the probable reasons for their popularity. So we came back to the office and found waiting for us the letter from Mr. Holmes Alexander which we print on page 9.

We read Mr. Alexander's "Aaron Burr, The Proud Pretender" with great interest last spring, and put it on our shelves next to McCaleb and Wandell and Minnegerode. But his excursion into the shallower and more tumultuous waters of literary criticism leaves us unconvinced. His emotions have a high B. T. U. content but they have made him careless and incoherent. He is so excited that he can't read what honest printing says, and his prose goes badly awry. A lot of what he says is going to seem silly when he looks at it again in the calm of a historian's study.

Look at his fourth paragraph, for instance. He says that the faculty style seems to have victimized Miss Mitchell. He means, probably, that it victimized us. (Our editorial on reference books recommended "Webster's Collegiate Dictionary": every historian ought to have it.) How did it victimize us? Well, Mr. Alexander quotes a clause which he thinks we wrote in our article on Civil War fiction, "the effects of melodrama is [*sic!*] offensive." If his emotions had been less vehement he would have seen that what we wrote was "its page by page reliance on all the formulas of sentimental romance and all the effects of melodrama is offensive." Reliance . . . is. The sentence is all right, and we have recommended Curme's "College English Grammar," though deep-breathing exercises would be just as helpful here. And one should check one's quotations.

Convinced that the most austere critical judgment is just a personal opinion rationalized, we don't like to argue, but Mr. Alexander insists on misrepresenting us. (Or is his emotion pure chivalry, in response to what he regards as an attack on a lady?) He asks if we have no praise for craftsmanship. If he will read "English '37," which we ran on this page for eleven weeks last summer, he will see what our praise is, and it may clarify his ideas about craftsmanship. He says that "Northwest Passage" never lived up to its first three hundred pages, and that it has no thought or philosophical overtones. Again, let us remember what literary opinion is, but if he will turn to our review of "Northwest Passage" (*Saturday Review*, July 3, 1937) he will find some notes on its thought and philosophy. He suggests that we may be committing a literary murder by discouraging Miss Mitchell from writing more and more novels. That shows his awe of criticism, which has no power to deter anyone from doing anything, and his lack of experience with writers, who aren't foolish enough to act on what critics say.

"Need an adventure novel have 'thought and philosophical overtones'?" No. But we were discussing "Gone with the Wind" in relation to a half-dozen other novels which deal with similar themes, all of them in our opinion much better novels. We gave at some length our reasons for considering it inferior to them, and nothing in Mr. Alexander's letter disposes us to confess error. He takes issue with us, when he bothers to consider what we actually said, in regard to its melodrama and its characters. He thinks that melodrama is all right. We do too, but we don't like such a high concentration of it in a novel which undertakes to present the realities of human experience. We don't like so much of it in any single book, and we don't like Miss Mitchell's inclusiveness. She uses practically all the time-worn situations and conventions of melodrama, and averages about five "East Lynne" curtains per hundred pages. We wish she had used fewer of them or worked up more combinations of her own.

We are not disposed to argue about character, either. Certainly not with Mr. Alexander, who can perceive no essential difference in vital characterization between Becky Sharp and Scarlett O'Hara. That gives the measure of his literary judgment, and the defence rests.

We protested when "Gone with the Wind" got the Pulitzer Prize in a year when at least a dozen better novels were published, but we have tried to avoid the general debate. Miss Mitchell is an expert storyteller and that counts heavily in her favor, even though the story she chooses to tell is full of hackneyed situations and effects. She has written a popular novel which Mr. Alexander accurately classifies when he mentions the public interest in Crawford and Hepburn as possible Scarletts. Fifty years ago he could have heard people describing handsome and rhetorical acquaintances as "the St. Elmo type" but that hardly makes Augusta Evans the equal of Thackeray. "Gone with the Wind" is a lively book which will hold anyone's interest over long stretches of prose, and it is full of vivid scenes rendered with dash and verve. But it is basically wish-fulfillment literature, like the novels which Mr. Cowie was discussing in Chicago. Its characters are as Tecla as those of Mrs. Evans, and rather more amateurishly rendered. Its sentiments are strong and lively but also commonplace and frequently cheap. Its total effect is a falsification of experience. There is nothing morally wrong with that kind of literature—if Mr. Alexander will turn to our issue of October 9, 1937, he will find us discussing it in its own terms. We recognize the success of "Gone with the Wind" in its own class and, if we thought anyone would be interested, would analyze it in detail. But in our article on Civil War fiction we were talking about a wholly different kind of literature. We were comparing Miss Mitchell's book with better and more serious novels, with novels that have to be taken seriously. We said that it cannot stand comparison with them, as literature, and it can't. Maybe Mr. Alexander should read the novels we were talking about.

Then if he will read the novels Mr. Cowie was talking about he will meet a lot of old friends and, judging by his letter, will have a wonderful time. He will find plenty of Rhett Butlers and a lot of women whom Miss Crawford could play to the queen's taste. Mrs. Southworth was a natural too. The public recognized that fact, and supplied the evidence that Mr. Alexander considers irrefutable. Let him be reassured: "The Fatal Marriage" was widely criticized but Mrs. Southworth went on to write more than sixty novels all told.

The old crack about back-biters who review because they cannot write does not impress us. Consumer's Research cannot make automobiles but is qualified to report on their use. It offers a service to the consumer and so do we. Our job is to read books and tell our subscribers what we think of them. It is a job that requires us to read them with some care. We recommend the same care to Mr. Alexander. He skimmed our article too fast; maybe he missed some of the evidence in "Gone with the Wind."

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Letters to the Editor: *Holmes Alexander to the Defense*

"Gone with the Wind"

SIR:—Your leading article in the issue of December 18 raises or rather resurrects a matter which has puzzled me and I know has puzzled American book readers for more than a year.

I refer to the downright snobbish treatment by the whole reviewing brotherhood of Margaret Mitchell. About a year ago last August I was in New York at the time "Gone with the Wind" was reaching the crest of its popularity. Everywhere I went among literary agents, authors, publishers, reviewers, this fact was noted with a giggle and a supercilious lifting of intellectual eyebrows. When this novel received the Pulitzer Prize the impression to be gathered in select circles was that it was a case (as Mr. Dooley used to remark) of "the Supreme Court following the iliction results." [Returns?—Ed.] In other words the Pulitzer Committee winked its eye and yielded to the unlettered vox. pop. *The New York Times* sighed through Mr. Ralph Thompson's throat that we had come to a pretty pass indeed when a novel full of bad grammar, historical mistakes, and ham actors could win the national trophy. Other reviewers echoed this mournful sigh. At Christmas time last year the Sunday *Times Review* printed a feature article which rather scornfully analyzed "Gone with the Wind" and concluded that its chief ingredient was "emotional content" (sex, I suppose), and that its sale was a fluke. At this Christmas season, with the book past its peak, you take the trouble to kick it in the face.

What's eating you people anyhow? Strangely enough this same issue of Dec. 18 seems to give some clue. The editorial expressed no small contempt for the un-"professional" writer. Is it because Miss Mitchell still has the debutante's blush on her writing instead of the cosmetic shine of a tired hack? If she splits infinitives, so does Hemingway. Her historical slips are no worse than Shakespeare's. Her Southerners are no more "theatrical" than Sinclair Lewis's Main Streeters from Zenith.

Indeed the very faculty style so disparaged in your editorial seems to have victimized Miss Mitchell in your piece about Civil War fiction. Her book, you say, is "hardly important" "as a novel." It has "too little thought and no philosophical overtones . . . no eye and no feeling for human character . . . the effects of melodrama is [*sic!*] offensive."

Now this is not only schoolroom criticism but it is cheap snobbery. I do not know what can keep a novel from being "important" when it is read by every eighth person in the country, and discussed by nearly every one who reads at all. There are, of course, more intrinsic values than popularity. A book can be a good novel without being great, but it is a dirty trick to spurn a chicken because it does not happen to be a turkey. Why condemn a book for not being what it was never supposed to be?

Need an adventure novel have "thought and philosophical overtones?" Then "Northwest Passage" and "Mutiny on the Bounty," to mention only two, must be trash. Is "eye and feeling for human character" to be judged by monkish reviewers only? But it is odd that Miss Mitchell's characters, like Dickens's before her, have got into the mouths of John and Jane Doe. I have heard people who seldom read a book refer to a man as "the Rhett Butler type." I have sat in on debates and heard it hotly argued whether or not Hepburn or Crawford could "play Scarlett." If Miss Mitchell does not have the "feel" of her characters, then Roosevelt has no radio appeal, for the judges are the same in both cases. If Scarlett and Rhett do not "live," then Becky Sharp is a puppet and Mr. Micawber is Charlie McCarthy.

As for the "offensive melodrama," that is the snootiest crack of all. Was the offense that, unlike so many long novels, this one lasted till the last page? Have you no praise for craftsmanship, even if it is un-"professional"? "Anthony Adverse," with all its "philosophical overtones," trailed off at the end in a most amateurish manner. And "Northwest Passage" never lived up to its first three hundred pages. Offended readers closed "Gone with the Wind" and shouted: "Encore."

There is more harm in this snobbishness than a mere expression of bad manners. Margaret Mitchell is a gifted story teller. She can create characters to set tongues wagging, she can swing a plot and make it crackle, she has the courage of patient endeavor, she is a "natural" if there ever was one. She is twice as "important" as the clever back-biters who review because they cannot write. I have no quarrel with personalities. I do not know Miss Mitchell. But I think, and I am not alone, that whoever discourages her from writing more and more novels has committed a literary murder. You print an article by Mr. Elliot Paul which pities the sensitive soul of poor Ernest Hemingway. And you keep on nagging the lady.

HOLMES ALEXANDER.

McDonough, Md.

"THIS ONE'S JUST LOUSY WITH INNUENDOS."

Double-Crostic Time Records

SIR:—I hasten to second most emphatically Marjorie Dennison's motion in the *Review* for Dec. 25th. In reply to Miss Dennison's request, I add my own time record for several recent puzzles. The times are given in minutes.

Puzzle No.:	190	191	192	193	194	195	196
Minutes:	32	58	57	64	41	53	108

Of course, not having been done under supervision for recording, these figures will have no standing. My feeling is that if I had been working under the supervision of a timekeeper, I might have speeded up a bit. On the other hand the knowledge that my time was to be recorded might have acted as a brake.

HAROLD A. SNYDER.

Tarrytown, N. Y.

SIR:—After solving all the puzzles in Miss Kingsley's three "Double-Crostic" books, I took a subscription to the *S.R.L.* in order that I might have the treat of working one weekly. Being an experienced cross-word puzzle fan and sighing for new worlds to conquer, I was charmed with this new type. I have worked about two hundred puzzles, with only one error, and am usually able to solve one in a couple of hours.

EDITH A. REED.

Dayton, Ohio.

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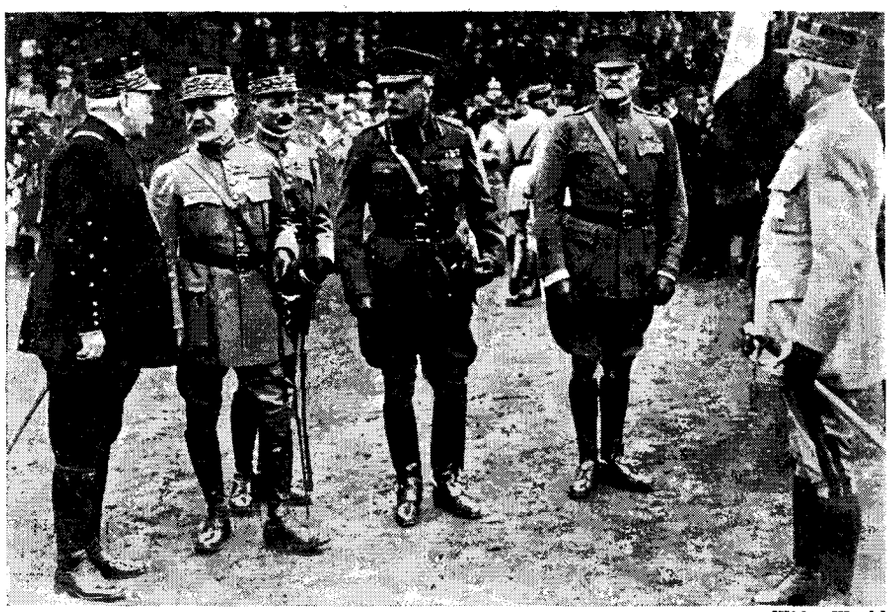

Wide World

A GROUP OF ALLIED GENERALS AT THE END OF THE WAR

From left: Generals Joffre, Foch, Weygand (Foch's Chief of Staff), Haig, Pershing, and Pétain. From "A Military History of the World War."

How the War Was Fought

A MILITARY HISTORY OF THE WORLD WAR. By Girard Lindsley McEntee. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1937. $7.50.

Reviewed by
R. ERNEST DUPUY, Major, F. A., U. S. A.

"ALTHOUGH countless books have already been written on the subject of the World War," says the author in his modest preface, "few of the younger generation of today will ever become familiar with the details of the greatest war fought in the history of the world." He's right, more's the pity. He could have gone further and included most of us, young and old alike. One need only to scan the pages of this book to realize that as the late President Woodrow Wilson once remarked, the roots of the World War "run deep into all the obscure soils of history." The cynic will add that its roots are the roots of wars to come. In any event, it behooves us, would we seek knowledge, to look at the record. This is that kind of book.

Only an ambitious mind would dream of compressing the kaleidoscopic events of 1914-18 in one volume; only a most painstaking mind could carry out the monumental task. Here is no rationalistic slapdash etching of what one author considers the highlights, nor, on the other hand, is it a critical analysis, although it follows the logical sequence of such presentation, insofar as discussion of the historical facts, military geography, plans, and operations of each campaign and each major operation are concerned. It is a compendium of history. Colonel McEntee has adopted a chronological method of attack, and has tied in all his chapters by means of timetables and graphs.

Four chapters are devoted to our preparatory steps on entering the struggle, and they include the essential logistics of assembling, training, supplying, and transporting America's effort overseas. Interesting data on the German submarine campaign and its almost fatal effect on Allied shipping, as well as on the counter-attacks which finally eliminated the plague, are contained in accompanying graphs and charts.

Compiled as it is from archives of both sides, the record is unbiased. Colonel McEntee refrains almost entirely from personal comment. So painstakingly reticent is he in this regard that where, in relating the Archangel adventure—sole instance of American troops fighting entirely split-up under Allied command—he quotes Major General Sir William Ironsides's complacent whitewashing of the ill-fated North Russian side-show:—"The original object of the expedition was therefore fully [?] achieved," the author's bracketed interrogation looms more forcefully than a thousand words of comment.

Some idea of the comprehensiveness of this huge volume may be attained from the fact that its 577 pages include 469 illustrations, for the greater part maps and charts. Colonel McEntee is to be congratulated upon his happy combination of pictorial and written presentation. The bibliography is wide in scope, the index full. The book has been adopted by the authorities of the U. S. Military Academy as a text book. It is essential not only to the student of World War history in general, but also as basis for research into individual campaigns and actions.

The Case for an Effective League

THEORY AND PRACTICE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. By Salvador de Madariaga. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. 1937. $1.50.

Reviewed by JAMES FREDERICK GREEN

FIRST presented as a series of five lectures for the Cooper Foundation and Swarthmore College, this volume combines the merits and defects of verbatim reporting. More than the usual amount of the speaker's personality has been conveyed to the printed page, for the sparkling charm of Salvador de Madariaga is not easily dissipated even in the long journey from auditorium to linotype. Although conciseness of presentation is welcome in these days of verbose writing, the limitations of the rostrum have compelled the elimination of many details which a book can more properly provide. The reader thus receives a panoramic view of international relations in theory but only a few candid camera shots of diplomacy in practice.

Long noted for his loyal and competent leadership in Geneva, where he has represented Spain at the Council, Señor de Madariaga deftly summarizes the case for a universal and effective League of Nations. The pervasive dogma of sovereignty has created a world organism which is "a monster with only one body and sixty heads," and the consequent chaos is made worse by the retrogressive philosophy of fascism. The spirit of a world community nonetheless has long existed, finding substance in the many agencies of international organization and in the "non-national patterns" of business, religion, and Marxism. As foreign affairs are now the most important confronting governments, it is the task of all ministers of foreign affairs—who, he suggests, might more properly be entitled "ministers of world affairs"—to construct out of this world community an international government which can provide peace.

There are many controversial issues upon which Señor de Madariaga is disappointingly silent. Although he analyzes several articles of the Covenant, he offers no criticism of the many proposals for its revision, toward either strengthening or weakening its coercive clauses. Except for the implication of scattered sentences no answer is furnished to the omnipresent question of today: Can a world government be built from such diverse materials as democracy, fascism, and communism? The whole dilemma of "peaceful change" is carefully avoided, despite many astute remarks concerning imperialism past and present. But in view of the broad scope of this brief work by an eminently sane and civilized statesman, it is perhaps ungrateful to demand the finished blueprints of the future world state.

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Advance Guard

NEW WRITING. SPRING 1937. Edited by John Lehmann. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1937. $2.75.

NEW WRITING. FALL 1937. The same.

NEW LETTERS IN AMERICA. Edited by Horace Gregory. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1937. $2.

Reviewed by ALFRED DASHIELL

THESE three books represent a new trend in methods of presenting "new" writing, supplanting to some extent the spate of little magazines which appeared in the experimental days of the early twenties and the proletarian days of the early thirties.

"New Writing" is an English production, and these two volumes are evidently the third and fourth of the series, although the first two to be sponsored by an American publisher. "New Letters in America" was apparently inspired by the English venture. Those looking for anything especially startling in these volumes will be disappointed. They are a projection of the proletarian sympathies and political preoccupation of groups of writers, many of them very young men.

The experiments in form may be dismissed as negligible, they add nothing to previous efforts in that direction. One hopeful sign for the movement is that the drum beat of propaganda is subdued, to the enhancement of the art of the stories and the general enjoyment of the reader. The point of view is present but the twisting of a tale to point a proletarian moral is much less in evidence. The most interesting material comes from the Spanish war, the most unusual from the Soviet writers, especially the Georgians, of whom there is a large representation in the Lehmann volumes. The second volume of "New Writing" seems considerably more substantial than the first, possibly because of the inclusion of Ignazio Silone's really excellent short story, "The Fox," and Mikhail Sholokhov's ghoulish but effective "The Father." Stephen Spender's article on the writers' congress in Spain is interesting because it reveals a good deal about the atmosphere surrounding the movement as a whole.

"New Letters in America" is a somewhat more miscellaneous collection but informed by much the same spirit, and has several of the same contributors. Elick Moll, John Cheever, and Eugene Joffe, who have already received considerable recognition in the magazines and anthologies, are represented by interesting stories. George Weller's "The Promised Land," a report on the Hightstown resettlement project for garment workers, is a good piece of work. The one piece of literary criticism is "Literature in a Political Decade," by William Phillips and Philip Rahv, which shows much of what all three volumes are driving at. Mr. Gregory in his introduction stressed the same point: namely, that the cycle of pragmatic naturalism developed in America from Theodore Dreiser through Sinclair Lewis to James T. Farrell has been closed. The transformation, he says, is one that tends to make the verse and prose resemble the quality of a fable. It is the element of imagination that the new writers are striving for, supplanting the social documentation and realistic reportage (horrid word!) which was thought to be the essence of new writing a few years ago.

Despite the obvious intention of the editors and the writers included in these volumes to get away from cults and to speak to the general, all the volumes have a faintly esoteric quality and a somewhat naive air of discovery of fairly obvious human qualities. This is especially apparent in the Spanish pieces, many of which give evidence of surprise that a people at war can be brave, unselfish, and determined, qualities which have provided a favorite literary theme for a good many years before the "united front" was invented. It will be interesting to watch the development of these two series of semi-annual volumes. As yet, they must be listed as promising rather than significant; as likely to interest a limited "advance-guard" rather than a general audience.

Alfred Dashiell, for many years an editor of Scribner's Magazine, *is now on the staff of* The Reader's Digest.

Percipient Spotlight

THE MORNING AFTER THE FIRST NIGHT. By George Jean Nathan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by MORTON EUSTIS

GEORGE JEAN NATHAN gives no evidence of suffering from a critical hangover in his new book. His latest compilation of "After-Thoughts" on criticism, acting, playwrights, audiences, and Hollywood—jammed into 282 pages of headlong print—is, in substance, witty and wise, rude and appreciative, shallow and profound, brilliant and exasperating; in the sum of its substance, almost always, provocative and entertaining.

Maurice Constant
GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

No matter whether you may think that the Nathan form of expression has, with the years, become too obvious a formula—almost too slick and too adroit; no matter how wildly some of the Nathanesque "cracks" may infuriate you, Mr. Nathan forces you to admit that he is a critic who both knows and speaks his mind, a critic who can stand rereading (almost all the contents of this book have appeared in various periodicals), and, most important, that he is a reviewer who does not bore you. He may or may not be "a critic of enormously superior percipience"—as he, with almost Shavian modesty, describes himself—but he makes his readers think. If he is often (and perhaps deliberately) an irritant, he is at least an irritant that produces a violent counter-action. And he has a robust and ribald sense of the ridiculous, an impudent way of coining an impudent phrase, of tossing an unexpected piece of slang into a surprised sentence which gives his writing (when his shafts are not too pointedly cruel) a sharp edge of humorous vitality.

Mr. Nathan, in this volume, turns his percipient spotlight on almost everything under the theater's—and Mr. Nathan's—sun. In one breath, he pokes swift and savage fun at some "flaw in this theater's immediate form, content and philosophy"; in the next, he turns to keen, objective commentary, as in his sober and intelligent examination of Maxwell Anderson, as poet and playwright, and his merciless analysis of the movie of "Romeo and Juliet," which, to him, was "as externally imposing as the Empire State Building and as internally vacant." Often, too, behind his most seemingly flippant diagnosis there is a depth of basic truth which makes it far less superficial than a more scholarly exercise.

Mr. Nathan's description of his brief sojourn in the film capital is perhaps the high point of his morning-after perorations—a brilliant, penetrating attack on Hollywood and its point of view. This chapter makes one want to shout, with as sincere a conviction as Nathan himself does: "Right or wrong, the theater." And, perhaps, to add: "The theater and George Jean Nathan."

Morton Eustis is contributing editor of Theatre Arts Monthly. *See page 22 for biographical note on Mr. Nathan.*

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Hammock in January

LADY BE GOOD. By Katharine Dunlap. New York: William Morrow & Co. 1938. $2.

I'M GETTING MARRIED. By Jolán Földes. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1938. $2.

Reviewed by FRANCES WOODWARD

IT used to be called hammock reading. It's years since I've seen a good twine hammock, but perhaps the deck chair, or the bed of the not-to-be-excited convalescent, is now the proper recumbent furniture for the perusal of the sort of novel exemplified by "Lady Be Good" and "I'm Getting Married." Or maybe if you transpose the adjective so the cliché reads "Curl up with a good apple and a book." . . . Anyhow, you have to take it lying down. If you really felt at all strong you'd tackle something stiff like "The Hollow Tree People."

"Lady Be Good" is set partly in England and partly in France. The heroine, Lucinda, is eighteen. Her mother is pretty, and flighty, and divorced, and remarried. Lucinda just has to take care of her, though she herself longs for a real home. Lucinda is more the eighteen-year-old of the Little Colonel era than of Bennington College, say. If it were not so I believe she would have guessed right in chapter one that she was going to marry the dark, handsome stranger and that he would turn out to be rich and titled. I guessed. I even guessed the little black dog would get hurt. The story is quite a lot like quite a lot of short stories; but if you like it in five thousand words you'll like it just as well in seventy-five. Some of the things the people say are really amusing. But the trouble is that they all, man and boy, woman and maid, have exactly the same turn for humorous phrase, so you have to keep watching who said it, in order to keep the dialogue straight in your mind. Oh, yes, the servants just love Lucinda. They always do. And everybody has plenty of money and there is only one bad storm in all the weather, and France must be such a pretty country.

"I'm Getting Married" is rather surprising. Jolán Földes won a large prize last year with "The Street of the Fishing Cat." And what with all the European troubles I would have thought that Hungary had gone a shade past the need for synthetic Little Women. But they may have excellent apples in Hungary, too.

So five girls set out to run an interior decorating business. Suzy, the heroine and the leader of the group, is a cabinet maker. Of all things! She works as hard as anything, right in the shop with all the rough men. They get to love her. She believes that God gave us our talents to Use, and that Life can be Fun. At the very beginning of the book she finds that her birth certificate is wrong (Suzy is an orphan, did I tell you?) and in order not to be deported she makes an arranged marriage with a Hungarian citizen. He needs the money to help his old mother. She never sees him after they leave the registry office. Three years pass. Suzy goes to Egypt on a job. Egypt is beautiful, but rather dirty. Then comes the time when the arranged marriage is supposed to end in an arranged divorce. Suzy knows that she loves this dark man who is her husband in name only. So she disguises herself and gets to know him and his wonderful old mother. In the end he falls passionately in love with her. He never guessed she was his wife all the time. Would you have guessed, reader? I did. Or at least I sort of did a little tiny bit.

Personally I love the fine old Winesaps that used to grow in my grandfather's orchard. But all you can ever get these days is those big Western apples, and I don't think they taste like much, do you?

FROM THE JACKET OF "I'M GETTING MARRIED"

Kipling's In-Laws

RUDYARD KIPLING'S VERMONT FEUD. By Frederic F. Van de Water. Weston, Vermont: The Countryman Press. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES E. CRANE

MR. VAN DE WATER, as he tells in a recent book, settled himself at Dummerston (near Brattleboro, Vermont) less than four years ago, and less than four miles from the farm where Beatty Balestier, Rudyard Kipling's brother-in-law, sat, with cataracts clouding his eyes, indulging in a sort of summing-up argument in defense of the devil-may-care life he had lived. At a cocktail party which the Van de Waters staged in Beatty's own home one night, Beatty told possibly a little more fully than he had ever told anyone before, his version of the feud which drove Kipling from Vermont within a few years after he and his bride, Caroline Balestier (Beatty's sister), had built their home, Naulakha, on land that had been part of the Balestier farm.

In the April issue of *Harper's Magazine* last year Mr. Van de Water came out with his first sketch of the historic quarrel. He found that feuds beget feuds. There arose a little feud over the facts and a feud over the propriety of dishing up again in print this domestic episode which was so painful to the Kiplings. In the present book Mr. Van de Water has corrected some of the minor errors of the earlier story and has told much more completely and vividly what he learned from Beatty at first hand, along with the testimony of others, including that given by Kipling at the hearing of Beatty Balestier for the alleged threat to kill. If Kipling had been murdered, it wouldn't have made a better story than Mr. Van de Water has made of this prolonged feud. He has characterized Beatty Balestier, who swore and swaggered his way through life in a blustering, hard-drinking, and zestful way, better than has ever been done before; he gives an illuminating glimpse of Mrs. Kipling which checks nicely with what I often heard about her from her intimate friend, the late Mary Cabot, and, what is more important than any minor shades of fact, he accurately conveys the electric atmosphere of the whole affair.

Since Kipling, in his autobiography, "Something of Myself," passed over the feud in silence, there is only one critic who now can say how far Mr. Van de Water has ambled from strict accuracy in his account—and that critic is Mrs. Kipling. Any quarrel is hardly over before the principals themselves are at a loss to account for their emotions, and it's still harder for an outsider to probe back forty years and synthesize the situation from the fragments of hearsay. But Mr. Van de Water has done it as well as in all probability can ever be done.

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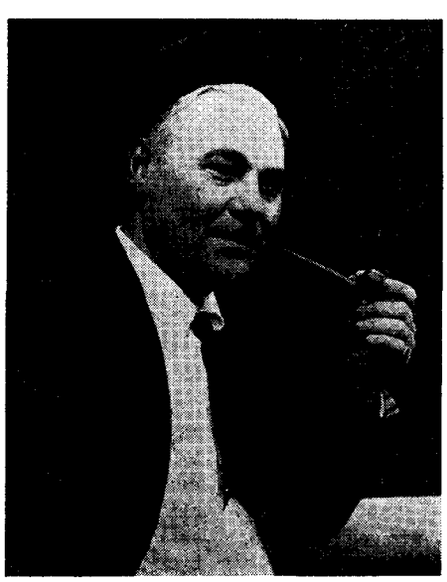
The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

O Rare Don Marquis

DON MARQUIS used to tell, with his own complete gusto, of a time in Hollywood a few years ago when he was taken ill with a heart attack. According to his story—which I dare say he improved in the narration—it was urgent for him to be got to hospital at once; all the ambulances were in service, so a hearse was sent to fetch him. In this sombre glass-paned vehicle he was laid on a stretcher and rolled off toward the clinic. But on the way, halted in a traffic jam, the hearse pulled up next to a smart little open roadster in which two frolicsome young women were gaily chattering. In the middle of their mirth they noticed the transparent chariot alongside; they piously withheld palaver, and glanced reverently through the glass panel where Don's burly figure lay decently composed under a blanket. At that moment he caught their gaze, and in spite of heartburn and syncope appalled them with a slow and magnificent wink. No one, may I add, was ever better furnished for that gesture of intimate apocalypse: he had the large and lustred eye, the heavy reef of eyebrow, which could make a wink seem as physically massive as a shrug. At any rate, Don always insisted, the damsels fell into a hysteric seizure, and as his carriage rolled away he saw them crash into someone else's car and attempt, with screams, to explain to a disbelieving policeman. "I'll bet," he used to add, "they led better lives after that."



DON MARQUIS

This may seem an odd salute to an old friend just gone, but I could not help thinking of it as we sat the other day at Don's own funeral service, and as some of his friends repaired, for the ritual of affection, to the nearest inn. I should not have dared to look him in the face, in funeral state, for fear either of seeing that wink—or not seeing it. I wish our taboos were not so strong: it would have been a happy circumstance if some of his lighter madrigals might have been read at the service: for perhaps he was, above all, a really great writer of humorous verse. How rare these are, the study of any anthology will quickly show. *Noah an' Jonah an' Cap'n John Smith* is the best known of his ballads in easy vein, but there are many many others. I forget which book contains the one about *Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego,* certainly one of his triumphs; and there's *David and Bathsheba* ("Oh what the hell, it's spring") and *The Old Brass Railing* and the lyrics of *mehitabel* and the unsurpassed *Famous Love Affairs.* The best of these are sure of preservation for a long time to come. It is the rarest and scarcest of all literary talents —I don't mean just verse of wit and satiric precision; I mean the stuff of real midriff humor—and even its own creators are only too likely to belittle it. As Don himself once wrote—

And so we raise superior eyebrows,
  And scorn the lovely slapstick stuff;
And so we pander to the highbrows—
  We hate it, but we bluff.

I remember one of his sisters telling me that sometimes, during his long illness, he was heard laughing to himself. He was not able to communicate the matter of his mirth: the many richnesses of that fine brain had been sealed by some blood-clot: but I like to think of that secret and unsharable communion. Gravity and levity were so mixed in Don's mind that it puzzled even himself, and certainly may have seemed shocking to many well-drilled citizens.

And then—so fertile and various was he—as soon as one begins to write of him as a humorist, other phases keep coming to mind. Perhaps the two books that most closely represent the moody and shifting interchange of his thinking are *The Almost Perfect State* and *Chapters for the Orthodox;* both of which, as books, proved to be almost completely unsalable. I recall a remarkable piece written about a dozen years ago by the late Stuart Sherman when he was editing the *Herald Tribune Books.* Mr. Sherman, coming to New York fresh from college teaching, with the cultured disabilities of a learned clerk, had the reasonable notion that Marquis, a newspaper columnist, was just an amusing merryandrew. And he recorded his agreeably naif astonishment to find his colleague a distinguished man of letters, and of a personality so effectively radiant that even separated by several places at a lunch table he could feel that someone important was there. It used to annoy me, incidentally, that though universities annually bestow honorific degrees upon many solemnities and shirts of starch it never occurred to any of them to accredit Don in this way. How could it be, I used to wonder, that Columbia, here in the very city where Marquis's daily column ran for so many years, was not acute enough to recognize and salute his great quality? But I acquiesced in this eventually, realizing that awareness rarely originates inside a university but is forced on it from without, against its most obdurate struggles. The professors, very likely, will now be able to tell us *why* Don's stuff was good, and bracket it in some critical niche. But his fellow journalists always knew that it *was.* I recall the letter that Hilaire Belloc wrote to Marquis last spring, à propos the famous piece about the Mermaid tavern parrot. Don was already too ill to read or understand this tribute, which said "It is a permanent addition to the furniture of my mind. It is a masterpiece and rare indeed."

The fact that Don Marquis was, in his own circle, the best loved man of his time, makes it now all the more a point of honor to speak with judgment. He was, regardless of mediocre work done under pressure, a deeply mercurial intuitive artist and passionately concerned with the ardors and problems of art. A human being so largely and kindly planned moves always in widening rings of irony. It was tragic to realize that he, who uttered so many genial shouts in praise of idleness, was actually broken by overwork. He was, if I ever saw one, a victim of the constantly tightening strain and pressure of our present way of living. There was, in the last two years, nothing left of him but the look in his eyes, and it was grim to speculate how much he realized of what had happened. I cannot help thinking that he had a very special message to younger artists, a message which was implicit in many of his seemingly jocular paragraphs. It was this: energy is not endless, better hoard it for your own work. Be intangible and hard to catch; be secret and proud

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and inwardly unconformable. Say yes and don't mean it; pretend to agree; dodge every kind of organization, and evade, elude, recede. Be about your own affairs, as you would also forbear from others at theirs, and thereby show your respect for the holiest ghost we know, the creative imagination. I read him wrong unless I see that cry in many a passage. Read, and perhaps be startled by, the angry trio of sonnets called *A Gentleman of Fifty Soliloquizes* (which he wrote several years before reaching that age).

By a natural association I think of a letter he wrote in 1928 when a group of friends had planned a 50th Birthday Party for him, which was to be humorously called the Marquis Semi-Centennial. Quite unwittingly we had touched upon a secret phobia of his. I venture to quote a few bits from that letter because it is surely important, once in a while, to know what people actually think behind the mask they learn to wear. And I somehow feel that his unusual frankness, though due to momentary fatigue or discouragement, may be valuable to someone.

"I simply could not go through with congratulations or a party or anything of the sort. If you are an institution you may not mind the idea of a semi-centennial; if you are a human being, the word itself is an acute toothache.

"In my case, it means to me that half a dozen novels, which I planned in my thirties, will probably never be written now, as I find myself still pot-boiling.

"I have never told anybody, how deep and abiding my professional disappointments are. I have had for fifteen years the consciousness of rather unusual powers—I can say this to you and have no risk of it being misunderstood as mere egotism. Along with that has gone the consciousness that, except in brief and fragmentary things, I have never displayed the powers I have, or developed them.

"Well, there has always been the hope that the stuff was coming through yet. I still have it, mixed with a lot of humility. But you cannot understand, nor won't until you get to be 47 or 48, the continual internal gasping hurrying sense that they are not started yet, the big things.

"I fight continuously and desperately against the idea that being 50 or 60 makes any difference at all—and it takes a lot of fighting and a lot of kidding along and a good deal of guts to keep steadily to the resolve to do something yet—and an awful lot of determination to keep from slumping into the easy affirmation: I've done something already. It isn't the tenth of what I should have produced.

"Merely to pay up present debts and obligations there are at least 18 months of desperate and continued pot-boiling. I have a schedule that calls for one short story or one article each week for 18 months. . . .

"Let's have a party in September, and not mention my birthday at all. . . . Forty and forty-five are bad enough; fifty is simply hell to face; fifteen minutes after that you are sixty; and then in ten minutes more you are 85.

"These ten years from forty to fifty are by before you know it. For the love of God, don't let them slip from you, as I did."—And by the "Love of God" he meant, as every artist does, the joy of creation.

That outcry was, I hope and believe, a passing mood of oversensitized chagrin. There indeed spoke the true dreamer, who is bound to exalt the undone at the expense of the accomplished. But, as his friends agreed in the barroom that gray New Year's Eve, there can be no sense of sorrow at the escape of a winged thing after cruel imprisonment. We had seen (it was his own words)

"Beauty as a valiant wing
Strike a white blow against a stormy sky."

In the noble old phrase, Diuturnity to his relics! Toward the end of *The Almost Perfect State* is a poem he wrote which seemed perfect for that afternoon—

Lines for a Gravestone

Here the many lives I led,
All my Selves, are lying dead:
All they journeyed far to find
Strawed by the dispersing wind:
You that were my lovers true,
That is neither sad nor new!

Naught that I have been or planned
Sails the seas nor walks the land:
That is not a cause for woe
Where the careless planets go!
Naught that I have dreamed or done
Casts a shadow in the sun:
Not for that shall any Spring
Fail of song or swallow's wing!

Neither change nor sorrow stays
The bright processional of days—
When the hearts that grieved die, too,
Where is then the grief they knew?

Speed, I bid you, speed the earth
Onward with a shout of mirth,
Fill your eager eyes with light,
Put my face and memory
Out of mind and out of sight.
Nothing I have caused or done,
But this gravestone, meets the sun:
Friends, a great simplicity
Comes at last to you and me!

Psychic Research

THE PSYCHIC WORLD. By Hereward Carrington. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1937. $2.75.

Reviewed by B. F. Skinner

DESCRIBED as "a comprehensive account of modern and primitive psychic phenomena," Mr. Carrington's book is actually a collection of random essays, held together only by the author's enduring interest in psychic research and profiting from no attempt at articulation. Almost no "modern psychic phenomena" are described. The reader is assumed to be familiar with examples and, in general, to accept them. The author raises only technical points. He argues that genius is not adequately accounted for by modern psychology and that the extraordinary powers of prodigies may be telepathic, clairvoyant, or spiritistic; that false recognition (the *déjà vu*) may be a psychic phenomenon; that incoherences and inaccuracies in the "communications" of mediums may be due to the fact that "communicators," spirit or otherwise, are only human, and that the facts of dissociation are not necessarily unfavorable to the view of survival of personality after death. In addition he describes certain Yoga practices and, curiously enough, various methods of hypnotizing animals and teaching dogs to respond to minimal cues from their trainer for the sake of simulating "powers of calculation." The rest of the book contains a collection of primitive "psychic manifestations," a theory of levitation, and some chapters upon the author's point of view toward psychic research.

Mr. Carrington acknowledges and decries the "credulity, superstition, and nonsense" that one meets with in his field. Unfortunately this has become a traditional disarming technique in the hands of writers who lack Mr. Carrington's integrity, as has also the hoary argument for tolerance based upon the history of new ideas. The fact that men laughed at and passed laws against bathtubs does not imply that psychic phenomena have a porcelain hardness. Nevertheless, we must agree with him that psychic research is entitled to the postulates that all is possible and that proof must be proportionate to the unusualness of the claim. He appeals for emphasis upon experiment and upon the facts, but except for some experiments upon levitation, he seems content to rely upon the usually handicapped observations of seances and upon anecdotal material.

It is perhaps to Mr. Carrington's credit that he is on the fence in psychic matters, but the book, taken as mere good reading, suffers accordingly. The layman who turns to it either for a satisfying yarn or two of teleplastic hair-pulling or, on the other hand, a racy exposé of fraud will be disappointed.

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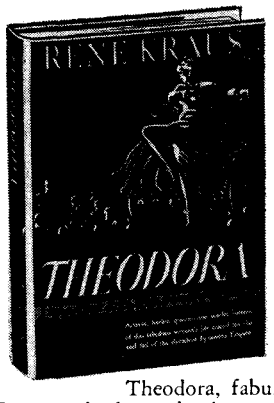
TALE OF BALI is completely different from anything else that ***Vicki Baum*** has ever written A long, absorbing and exotic novel, with an atmosphere comparable only to that of *The Good Earth,* it is being received with high critical acclaim. "All in all this is by far the best book which Miss Baum has written in years. It is stirring, unusual, glamorous," says the New York *Times Book Review.* . . $2.75

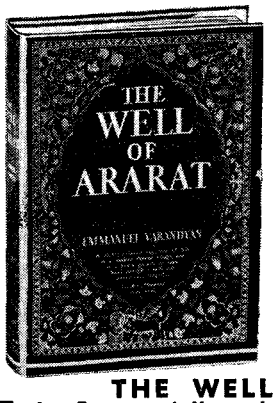


Theodora, fabulous Byzantine Empress, harlot and saint, was an ill-treated circus girl who rose to imperial power and took a woman's revenge on a man-made world. **THEODORA,** ***by René Kraus,*** is the story of her life: a life which unfolds against the most extravagant background that the world's history affords. "First rate entertainment," says Virginia Kirkus. $3.00

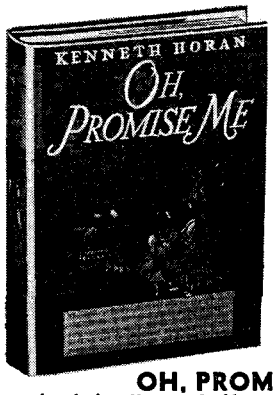
Kenneth Roberts'
NORTHWEST PASSAGE ranked as America's best-selling novel of 1937. The new year sees it sweeping to success in England with two honors rarely accorded to a book from America: It is the January Selection of the English Book Society and the *Daily Mail* Book-of-the-Month. Do you own a copy? 709 pages. $2.75. And do you own all four of Roberts' famous "Chronicles of Arundel" — ARUNDEL, RABBLE IN ARMS, THE LIVELY LADY, CAPTAIN CAUTION. Handsome uniform binding. Each, $2.50

The new Sinclair Lewis novel will be published January 21st.

Its title is **THE PRODIGAL PARENTS.** It deals with "the revolt of the parents against the revolt of youth." It introduces—in Fred Cornplow, motor car dealer of Sachem Falls, N.Y.—a character who will take his place beside George Babbitt, Dr. Arrowsmith and Sam Dodsworth. Reserve your First Edition *now* at your bookseller's. $2.50



THE WELL OF ARARAT, ***by Emmanuel Varandyan,*** is the Avery Hopwood prize novel, 1937 Whit Burnett, editor of *Story,* says of it, "The book is a beautiful picture, rich and mature, of the Persian village life it describes . . The growth of the boy into maturity through the events which affect his uncle and the young girl is a beautiful treatment, and I think the book as a whole is very tender and moving." $2.50



OH, PROMISE ME is the new book by ***Kenneth Horan,*** author of the inimitable *Remember the Day,* which William McFee called "real Americana in a field of synthetic performers." Here is the gay story of Pappa's accession to Congress, Aunt Melonys spectacular wedding, and the mysterious disappearance of that engaging trusty, Cot Noble. $2.00. (The two books may be purchased together for $3.50)

DOUBLEDAY, DORAN

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Books and World Peace

(*Continued from page 4*)

de Paix Perpetuelle," later to be completed by Jean Jacques Rousseau. The outbreak of the Revolutionary Wars at the close of the century induced Immanuel Kant to publish, in 1795, his "Essay on Perpetual Peace." There he maintained that though peace might be an unrealizable ideal, the purpose of such an ideal was the shaping of men's lives. Within modern times, looking to these distinguished legal and philosophic ancestors for precedent and example, President Wilson conceived his Covenant of the League of Nations which cynical interpreters have subsequently thrown to the diplomatic wolves, and Mr. Frank Kellogg designed his now sadly violated Pact of Paris.

During the Great War itself, Utopians, realists, and "debunkers" alike were all but silent. The products of those four abnormal years, when hysterical propaganda ran away with judgment and experience, fell mainly into two categories; the literature of romance and the literature of escape. Such work as Rupert Brooke's "Poems," Donald Hankey's "A Student At Arms," and H. G. Wells's "Mr. Britling Sees It Through" emphasized either the glory of war or the inspiration of civilian sacrifice. When at last the prolonged strain defeated even the most impervious of sentimental optimists, escapology took the place of romance. Who now remembers the war-time "best-sellers," by means of which we drugged our exacerbated nerves into endurance? I can recall the name only of one, Stephen McKenna's "Sonia." The rest have disappeared into the limbo which swallows those writers who seek to conceal rather than to interpret the significance of their time.

Of the vast post-war literature we have probably not even yet acquired a true perspective. Arnold Bennett once declared that the permanent literature of the Great War would not even begin to appear until twenty years after it ended. Some day, the author of a new "War and Peace," writing with a detachment unattainable by us who are still blinded by the tragedies that we have seen and deafened by the explosions which we have heard, will illuminate the second decade of the twentieth century as Tolstoy illuminated the first two decades of the nineteenth. Meanwhile, in addition to the intensity of feeling and language characteristic of most war literature, there is one generalization which we can make about all of it, whatever the country of its origin or the type to which it belongs.

Never before, in the world's history, has there been so universal a condemnation of war proclaimed by the leading writers of many countries in so great a variety of literary categories. Whether the author is a grim and ruthless realist like Henri Barbusse, Erich Maria Remarque, Richard Aldington, William March, or Humphrey Cobb; a poignant and tragic realist like R. C. Sherriff, Siegfried Sassoon, or the Zweigs; an epic realist in the grand manner of T. E. Lawrence; or a "debunker" such as C. E. Montague and Brigadier-General Crozier in "Disenchantment" and "A Brass Hat in No Man's Land" respectively; he—and too infrequently she—uncompromisingly denounces the suffering, waste, grief, and stupidity of war. The few books—such as Yeats-Brown's "The Dogs of War"—which perversely seek to do the opposite, have acquired no public and achieved no significance.

With the recurrent crises of the past seven years has come a new interest in the literature produced by war experience, but this interest no longer centers in the realistic novels of trench life. It has rather transferred itself to the biographies and autobiographical fiction produced by authors who attempt, like Storm Jameson in "No Time Like the Present," to relate their personal stories to those changing world movements and tendencies described by George Eliot as "the larger destinies of mankind," and to treat the Great War as one catastrophic episode in a world where civilization itself is now at stake. So far, literature of this type is only in its experimental stage. Confronted with a menace even more appalling than the tragedy which many of us who are not yet old still vividly remember, its future function is suggested by some words quoted by Julien Benda from Malebranche's "Meditations Chrétiennes": "There are a few just men who prevent me from sleeping." Benda himself indicates the purpose of this galvanizing process: "Peace . . . will not be the abstaining from an act, but the coming of a state of mind."

If the primary task of modern writers is to create that state of mind, they can still learn from the masters of historical literature the three main methods by which this saving obligation may be fulfilled. Like the author of "The Trojan Women," they can tell the stark truth about war—whether in Flanders or Gallipoli, in Abyssinia, Spain, or China—so that those who experienced shall never forget, and those who have never known may understand. Like the authors of "War and Peace" and "The Dynasts," they can seek to act as interpreters between conflicting groups—between nation and nation, capital and labor, the old and the young—which without some intermediary find it difficult to understand one another. Or they can try to present, like the Hebrew prophets, the planners of peace and the architects of a City of God, some constructive picture of a finer civilization, a new Jerusalem, a better England, France, or America, in which men and women will no longer be dominated by ancient slogans and old traditions, but will at last become capable of understanding facts and looking truth in the face.

If the literature of tomorrow can reinterpret for a perilous age these major functions of the past, there remains at least the possibility that it will not be our civilization which will go down in ruins, but war itself that will pass away.

Vera Brittain, who has just concluded a lecture tour in America, produced a few years ago in her "Testament of Youth" one of the most effective of contemporary anti-war books.

The Problem of Youth

HOW FARE AMERICAN YOUTH? By Homer P. Rainey, and others. New York: Appleton-Century Co. 1937. $1.50.

THIS is primarily a book of facts and figures, of information about various aspects of the so-called youth problem. It is a large subject for so small a book, including such matters as schooling, employment, vocational adjustment, health, recreation, sex and marriage, character development, religious life, and citizenship. There are special chapters on rural youth and Negro youth. While the scope is comprehensive, the treatment is by no means superficial; and while the bulk of the material is factual, the statistics are never dull but fall naturally into place in a simply and clearly written, smooth-flowing text. This is all the more remarkable, since half a dozen writers collaborated on the manuscript.

No one, after reading this book, can help being convinced that there *is* a youth problem, properly so called, although it comprises many particular problems and is itself part and parcel of the larger problem of economic welfare and social progress,—and although there always has been and always will be a youth problem, modified and sometimes accentuated in one or another of its phases by social and economic changes. Here no attempt is made to offer solutions, but existing problems are identified and described and their inter-relations suggested. If the importance of jobs is stressed, the necessary work and rightful place of youth in the modern world are broadly conceived with reference to all the satisfactions and responsibilities of life. As much concern is shown over what youth can do for society as over what society can do for youth. Both things are essential to the saving of democracy. Thus there are many deep and far-reaching implications in this truly challenging little volume.

The book is a publication of the American Youth Commission of the American Council on Education—a sort of preface to the task undertaken by the Commission, that of formulating a comprehensive program for the care and education of American youth. It is a task in which the Commission is seeking the coöperation of agencies, organizations and individuals, including young people themselves, with a contribution to make to the solution of the youth problem. No perfect program or permanent solution is possible, but the effort is certainly worth while.

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Scoops from Rome

A REPORTER AT THE PAPAL COURT. By Thomas B. Morgan. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by EUGENE LYONS

A FOREIGN correspondent stationed at Rome has in reality a twofold assignment—Italy and the Vatican. Now one of these is more important in a professional news sense, now the other. But for millions of Americans the Vatican is by far the more essential of the double task, and Italian events have a meaning chiefly in their effect upon the affairs of the Roman Catholic Church.

Thomas B. Morgan served as correspondent in Italy for some eighteen years, with the Associated Press until 1924 and as head of the United Press Bureau in Rome thereafter, until about a year ago. He has therefore been as close to Italian and Papal affairs after the World War as any American newspaperman. This reviewer met him first at Livorno (Leghorn) covering the historic congress of the Socialist Party whose split at that gathering in effect cleared the road to power for Mussolini. During these long years Morgan won himself a solid reputation as a trigger-quick, well-informed agency newspaper man. Unlike George Seldes, Hiram K. Motherwell, David Darrah, and other American correspondents who got in wrong by too vigorously accurate reporting, Mr. Morgan found the Fascist regime rather to his taste. He achieved more friendly personal relations with the blackshirt dictator probably than any other American journalist, collaborated with the Duce on a book, and was made a Commendatore.

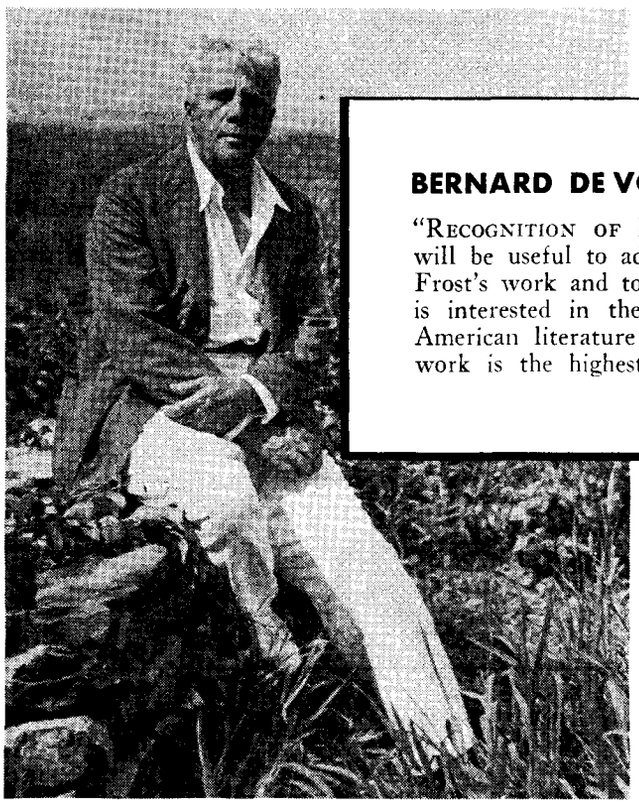
His talent for uncritical friendship also stood Mr. Morgan in good stead in the second and sometimes larger half of his job: the reporting of Vatican news. It is this phase of his long experience that is set down in "A Reporter at the Papal Court," a well-written and colorful story of the Roman Catholic Church in the post-war period from the vantage point of an American reporter whose clientèle included many millions of American Catholics. Though not a Catholic himself, Mr. Morgan shows a real appreciation of Catholic points of view.

His book neither pretends nor attempts to interpret the role of the Vatican in world affairs. It limits itself to a description of the main surface events, close-ups of Church dignitaries from the Pope down. It unfolds a fascinating picture of the life of the Vatican. For this reviewer, however, and for others, no doubt, the chief interest of the volume lies in its cumulative picture of how Vatican news is collected and fought over by the practising correspondents. The author makes no secret of the fact that he was always, or nearly always, first with the news. The detailed recollection of his many Vatican scoops makes diverting reading.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 197)

CHARLES LAMB—"TO CLARA NOVELLO."

The oboes, violins, French horns, guitars,
Leave in my wounded ears inflicted scars;
I hate those trills, and shakes, and sounds that float
Upon the captive air. I know no note. . . .
I sit at oratorios like a fish
Incapable of sound.



BERNARD DE VOTO SAYS:

"RECOGNITION OF ROBERT FROST will be useful to admirers of Mr. Frost's work and to everyone who is interested in the generation of American literature of which that work is the highest achievement."

ROBERT FROST, from a photograph by Bernard DeVoto

Recognition of ROBERT FROST—

THIS book commemorates the 25th anniversary of the acceptance of Frost's first published work: *A Boy's Will.* It contains the best of all that has been written about Robert Frost by such men and women as *Edward Thomas, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Padraic Colum, Mark Van Doren, Norman Douglas,* and many others. It is a revealing and comprehensive record of the impact on America made by her major poet, three times winner of the Pulitzer Prize.

Illustrated with rare photographs and drawings. $2.50 at all bookstores.

With RECOGNITION OF ROBERT FROST, your Frost library should include:

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COLLECTED POEMS ($5.00)
SELECTED POEMS ($2.50)
A BOY'S WILL ($1.75)
NEW HAMPSHIRE ($2.50)
FROM SNOW TO SNOW (75c)
NORTH OF BOSTON ($2.00)
WEST-RUNNING BROOK ($2.50)
MOUNTAIN INTERVAL ($2.00)

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The Normans in Italy

THE GREATEST NORMAN CONQUEST. By James V. Osborne. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1937. $5.

Reviewed by RAYMOND J. SONTAG

IN the restless and violent eleventh century, few peoples were either as restless or as violent as the Normans. Their conquest of England was only one of their exploits, although in historical perspective it was, despite Mr. Osborne's title, the greatest. Their conquest of southern Italy and Sicily undoubtedly seemed more momentous at the time, and even today the exploits of Tancred de Hauteville's sons seem almost incredible.

Like other landless Normans, they were drawn to southern Italy by tales of wealth and land to be won in the service of lords who were quick to quarrel but fearful of the risks of battle. For Italian and Lombard, Greek and Saracen, life was too pleasant to be sacrificed; Normans, ready to kill and be killed, were valued mercenaries. Tancred's sons soon emancipated themselves from their employers, and set out on a career of conquest. Before the century closed they had, by a judicious mixture of treachery and valor, conquered what was later to be known as the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Along the way they had first defeated the pope in battle and then become vassals and defenders of the papacy. In the course of that defense they sacked and burned Rome with more destructive effects than the Vandals before them or the Germans after them. The most wily of the family, Robert Guiscard, had begun on an even more ambitious design, to seize Constantinople itself; and in the light of what he had done, it would be presumptuous to deny that he might have succeeded had he not been stopped by death.

Mr. Osborne brings to this story enthusiasm, personal and minute acquaintance with the geography of the Two Sicilies, and a knowledge of the chief literary sources, primary and secondary. His account is, therefore, full of life, action, and detail—possibly too much of the last for many readers. He also brings, however, an unsure critical judgment, inadequate knowledge of medieval history outside the Italian peninsula, an inordinate and rather boring preoccupation with sex, and a race prejudice which not only blinds him to the virtues of Greeks and Saracens, but leads him into unconvincing apologies for unsavory episodes in the career of his Norman heroes. The result is a most uneven book, interesting when not weighed down by the author's determination to tell everything, entertaining except for the extraneous, unconvincing, and largely invented erotic scenes, informative within the limits of his knowledge, judgment, and prejudice. Possibly it is unfair to stress the defects, however. It is a vigorous tale of vigorous, ambitious, single-minded men, a good antidote for tales of frustration and defeat.

Raymond J. Sontag is professor of history at Princeton.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE JUDAS WINDOW *Carter Dickson* (Morrow: $2.)	Young Englishman, found in locked room with murdered father-in-law-to-be, provides Henry Merrivale's knottiest, most interesting problem.	Top-notch courtroom scenes, leading to exposé of most ingenious murder device in years, give reader three engrossing hours.	First-rate
SILENT WITNESSES *John Stephen Strange* (Crime Club: $2.)	Ex-wife suspected of killing vanished N. Y. lawyer. Barney Gannt, pix-man sleuth, clears her and barely thwarts second slaying.	More "body" than most mysteries; also more sentiment, and more nice people. High-grade deducing and urbane background also help.	Major league
A BULLET IN THE BALLET *Caryl Brahms and S. J. Simon* (Crime Club: $2.)	Puzzling popping-off of three successive Petroushkas in ballet troupe doesn't bother troupers much but annoys Scotland Yard.	Liberal education in mental, moral, and physical vagaries of ballet world; some hilarious scenes — but the detecting doesn't come off.	Not too good
THE EMBARRASSED MURDERER *Gail Stockwell* (Macmillan: $2.)	Too many iron-clad alibis lead Kingsley Toplitt to killer of "Sugar" Plumm, her hapless friend, and one more unfortunate.	Rather deliberately paced for tale of flighty radio stars, their ex-wives and such, but ably plotted and mystifying throughout.	Competent
SUDDEN SILENCE *Cortland Fitzsimmons* (Stokes: $2.)	Society girl, crazy over jazz maestro, sees his rival slain on bandstand and by intricate snooping spots double slayer.	Murder method tricky, but garrulous and overdrawn characters delay action — with "atmosphere" and humor laid on by shovel.	Deep silence

Plan for a Society

THE ABOLITION OF POVERTY. By James Ford and Katherine Morrow Ford. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND G. FULLER

THE specific aim of this book is to show that "poverty can be abolished and by measures that are legal, businesslike, and consonant with the traditions of our pioneering democracy." The question is whether we do or do not want to have the poor with us always. Where there's a will, there's a way; indeed, there are many ways of abolishing poverty, and what we chiefly lack is the will.

Not by any single method, however, is the problem to be solved, but by a combination of all helpful methods, fused into a unitary, national plan. The present book is an outline of such a comprehensive and coördinated program. Taken singly there is nothing novel or startling about any of the numerous proposals, but taken all together the effect (on the reader, at least) is almost Utopian. Certainly a world—or in this case, a United States of America—without poverty would be a close approach to "the good society."

Among the many proposals discussed, some of them very briefly, are such familiar ones as sterilization of the unfit, birth control, vocational training and placement (including a nation-wide system of employment exchanges), eradication of child labor, extension of health and mental hygiene services, conservation of natural resources, reduction of wastes in production and distribution, measures for preventing depressions or limiting their effects, and social insurance. The last, it is remarked, does not prevent life's hazards of unemployment, sickness, and old age, but can be made to prevent the dependency which often grows out of them. Social security legislation is thus regarded as a secondary means of abolishing poverty, as contrasted with such primary methods as economic planning, eugenics, and more and better education.

Fundamental to the general program of economic planning is the task of increasing the volume of distributable wealth and thus the potential *per capita* income. Making the laborer more productive and thus worthy of his higher income is a corollary. A third task is that of seeing that he receives his proper share through minimum-wage legislation, supplemented where necessary by appropriate policies for industrial control and the redistribution of wealth.

Obviously the obstructions and difficulties already encountered in furthering different parts of this program would apply to the establishment and success of the program as a whole. There are still difficulties over "governmental interference," "excessive federalization," and so on, as the Fords recognize. In their book there are even some strong suggestions of "socialized medicine." But as the authors say in their preface, they have only tried to make as "reasonable and convincing a case" as they can. They have done well, and done it simply and readably.

Raymond G. Fuller is a journalist and sociologist and author of a number of books on social problems.

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Rewriting the History of Medieval Europe

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF EUROPEAN CIVILIZATION. By Alfons Dopsch. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company. 1937. $5.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

HERE, to the great relief of hundreds of graduate students in history, is Dopsch's monumental "Wirtschaftliche und Soziale Grundlagen der Europäischen Kulturentwicklung aus der Zeit von Caesar bis auf Karl den Grossen" done into English. It is one of the major historical works of our time, the importance of which is gradually impressing itself on social and economic historians, sociologists, journalists, and others who have some touch with, and perhaps help form, the opinions of the reasonably educated public. Even in its present quite adequate translation, however, it is not a book that this public can be expected to read. Wholly devoid of narrative interest, its details chosen for purposes of argument rather than for adornment or exposition, crammed with obscure proper names and references, Professor Dopsch's book is in many ways a characteristic product of "pure" historical scholarship. The professor loves a quarrel with his fellow *Gelehrten*, and picks at least one a page. He defends his interpretations with a zeal not by any means unknown in the natural sciences, but surely stronger, less discerning in the social, than in the natural sciences. He is not, however, afflicted with violent Germanic patriotism, racial or political, and from his crowded pages there does emerge one main thesis, the implications of which transcend this book.

Professor Dopsch holds that the famous "fall" of the Roman Empire in the West was by no means the catastrophic overthrow of an advanced civilization by primitive Germanic barbarians. On the contrary, medieval (and hence modern) European civilization descends in an orderly, evolutionary fashion from that of the late Roman Empire. In fact, he comes very near asserting that the relations between Germans and Romans were something like those between Irish or French-Canadians and Yankees in New England —nearer, at any rate, to that sort of relation than to catastrophe, conquest, fire, sword, and rapine.

Like most innovators in such matters, Professor Dopsch undoubtedly exaggerates and oversimplifies. But in a field where patriotism might add to the normal human desire to prove a point, Professor Dopsch is singularly detached. You never feel that he exaggerates the degree of civilization of the ancient Germans because he feels it is nice to have the Germans civilized; indeed, he does not exaggerate nearly as much as did nineteenth century historians like J. R. Green, who made the Germans primitive because they felt it was nice to be primitive. Much of Professor Dopsch's material will still have to be fought over by experts. But his main conclusions seem likely to hold for some time, and may even give a moment's pause to our own prophets of doom. For years a lot of self-made Isaiahs have thundered forth in sermon, novel, and miscellaneous sociological writing the news of the impending crack up of contemporary civilization. We are going the way of the Romans, with appropriate smoke and flame. Well, it seems the Romans didn't go that way at all. Not that this knowledge will quiet our prophets. They will never believe in so obvious a doctrine as that of the continuity of history. They can always fall back on the Flood, or on the Apocalypse.

Colonial Capital

ANNAPOLIS. Anne Arundel's Town. By William O. Stevens. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1937. $3.

ASIDE from the fact that the United States Naval Academy is situated at Annapolis, the old town, for its history, legends, architecture, and local characters, is full of interest. Mr. Stevens, who has already given us a pleasing book on old Nantucket, has spent some time unearthing and bringing to light unpublished incidents with respect to the material he has gathered concerning Annapolis. The history of the Naval Academy is interwoven with the history of the historic town. The book has fifteen chapters, together with epilogue, appendix, and index, and many attractive black and white drawings by the author. It makes an attractive book for anyone especially fond of the City of Chimneys or associated with the Navy. Peter Hagner Magruder writes a foreword. The Colonial capital of Maryland has had an unusually picturesque history, and the author has captured a great deal of its charm.

Spiritual Pilgrimage

PAGES FROM AN OXFORD DIARY. By Paul Elmer More. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1937. $1.50.

Reviewed by REINHOLD NIEBUHR

IT is a little difficult to understand why Paul Elmer More should have conceived his posthumously published "Apologia Pro Vita Sua" in the form of an "Oxford Diary." It was, to be sure, recorded during a visit in Oxford in the years 1924-25. But the pretension that it is the confession of faith of an Oxford don is completely unconvincing. Furthermore, the statement of faith which it records has value precisely because it is More's confession and that of no one else.

Once the difficulty of this abortive anonymity is overcome, the book proves to be a rewarding account of More's spiritual pilgrimage. It is a simple, and sometimes profound and moving, record of one whose "being has become absorbed in the quest of God and the realization of that spirit world of which he is Lord and Master." Briefly he traces his spiritual pilgrimage from his theological youth ("I was born, so to speak, a theologian and my first literary work was a sermon") through romanticism; a "hard rationalism and materialism" ("a thick notebook was filled with the project of a new philosophy which should prove once and for all that men are the product of a fatalistic law of chance and probability"). "Disappointed in metaphysics" the next stage was that which gave "the stamp to my reputation, such as it is" that is, the period devoted to

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literary criticism. His interest was the search in every type of letters for "the spontaneous expression of the *élan vital* —and that long before Bergson had popularized the phrase."

"Then began a passionate search to discover the eternal verities behind the veil, the realm of Ideas which Plato taught.—I can say simply and without reservation that to this goal I attained and that I shall end my days a conscious, as I was born an unconscious, Platonist." Despite the seeming finality of the stage of Platonism, most of the pages of the diary are devoted to the problem of the relation of Platonism to Christianity. They record his final quest for "a dynamic, personal agent at work" for a faith which would do justice to his conception of life as will rather than Idea, inherited from his romantic period. This quest concludes with his discovery of the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation.

Perhaps the device of writing in the name of an Oxford don expresses the feeling that this record of a spiritual pilgrimage is more characteristic of European than of American culture. American culture remains predominantly naturalistic and does not sense the crisis which drove More in the direction he took. But his loneliness may also be due to his own limitations. He confesses at least one limitation quite accurately in the closing page: "My voice is dull and confused and it is hardly a cause for weeping not to be numbered among the prophets. And so I sit and wait in patience—for the end which is no end."

The Tragedy of Cotton

THE WASTED LAND. By Gerald W. Johnson. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1937. $1.50.

Reviewed by JOHN D. ALLEN

"SOUTHERN Regions of the United States," the major-scale survey prepared by Howard W. Odum for the Southern Regional Committee of the Social Science Research Council, is becoming the court of appeal for disinterested Southerners troubled by the problems of the South. No serious discussion of soil erosion, tenantry, underprivileged urban workers, racial tensions, the educational lag, can profitably go far without resort to its encyclopedic pages. But the survey is too formidable and scholarly to attract soon those who need it most.

Mr. Johnson's excellent book grows out of "Southern Regions" as a digest and a commentary intended for the layman. His chapters on "the waste of the land" and "the waste of the people" conveniently summarize the depressing facts. His conclusion, that "Southern deficiencies are all in those things which may be supplied by intelligent effort," agrees with the original, as do his broad suggestions for a program of regional planning. If he assumes that such planning can importantly proceed within the traditional framework of Southern economy, that is likewise the assumption of "Southern Regions."

"The Wasted Land" is the work of a competent journalist and biographer, and it admirably realizes the purpose of its author. It is a useful introduction to the longer study.

The New Books

Biography

THE SECOND ADMIRAL. By Richard S. West, Jr. Coward-McCann. 1937. $5.

Style—pedestrian, but marching straight ahead, no dallying to pluck fine flowers of eloquence, no excursions up side paths, no obscurities, no period decorations. Subject—David Dixon Porter, the second of the three men to hold the rank of full admiral, U. S. Navy, and as a personality more interesting than the other two (Farragut, Dewey) put together. Born during the War of 1812; first service in the Mexican navy, their War of Independence; next service, American navy, our War with Mexico; final service, Civil War—an impetuous, inventive, intelligent sea-dog, of unbridled picturesqueness in expression, who took on controversies with William H. Seward (won), Gideon Welles (lost), and Ben Butler (draw); set international speed records in charge of new liners; wrote bad poetry and worse novels but good jokes; drew clever caricatures, broke the back of the Confederacy among the Western rivers, wanted to fight England, refounded the Naval Academy.

A long list that makes a long book in which all incidents are pursued to their holes, knocked on the head, skinned, and the pelts classified under the fundamental motive in correct museum style. Also a scholarly book, worked up from parasangs of ancient documents, which reveals scars of the whittle used to keep it from being too long—occasionally special knowledge is necessary to understand the implications, but never to understand Mr. West's lucid paragraphs. There is little psychological analysis, but little occasion for it; the man's character lay on the surface and was of such refractory material that no outside person or circumstance succeeded in scratching it till he was in his dotage. The astonishing thing is that his life had not been written before; and the fortunate one that it fell into such competent hands for the first writing.

F. P.

THE TESTAMENT OF CALIBAN. By David Edstrom. Funk & Wagnalls. 1937. $3.

"Move over, Benvenuto Cellini, and make room on the narrow shelf of great autobiographies for this self-life of David Edstrom, a rival of your genius in sculpture as in the revelation of himself and of the amazingly various people he has met."

In spite of Rupert Hughes's eulogistic foreword, Cellini's eminence as artist and author is hardly challenged by the boisterous saga of this living Swedish-American sculptor. Edstrom's career has been stormy and his progress absorbing, but not nearly so heroic as he would have us believe. For his is a colossal conceit, which nullifies the candor of his narrative and tends to alarm the receptive reader.

Edstrom's life has been one of paradoxes and anomalies, of bitter frustrations and glittering triumphs. He was born sixty-four years ago in Sweden, was brought up modestly in Iowa, and returned to Europe in the stoke-hold of a freighter in order to pursue the formal study of art. His natural talents were quickly recognized by his preceptors at the Royal Academy in Stockholm, patronage was easily obtained, and the ex-stoker and slaughter-house worker was not long in becoming a familiar drawing-room figure.

He drifted from Florence to Paris and London, returned to America, lived at a small Southern college, later in a Western monastery, and finally "went Hollywood." Through his travels and his commissions he met ordinary seamen, cultural and political leaders, and nobility. He has been regarded as an enfant terrible by Gertrude Stein, Thiel, the great Swedish collector, Matisse and Sargent, Robert Millikan, Papini, Berenson, and the whole Swedish Royal Family.

Edstrom makes more of the constant struggle being waged within himself than of the obstacles which he surmounted in his rise from obscurity to prominence. He considers himself a modern Caliban, a savage misfit with primitive habits and unfettered emotions. His adventures are exciting reading but the epic note is always disturbing.

J. S. P.

Fiction

THE PIONEERS. By Courtney Ryley Cooper. Little, Brown. 1938. $2.

The recent talking picture, "The Plainsman," was made from some of Mr. Cooper's stories of the West. His present novel of Kit Carson and the pioneer days he dedicates to that best-known of moving-picture scenarists, Frances Marion, and one can easily see that it is aimed not only at the fiction-reading public but at the screen. Mr. Cooper started in his twenties writing a play, and since that time he has poured out stories and articles at a great rate. The present book is full of dramatic incident but is written with no particular distinction. Barton, the father of the heroine, who starts the expedition to Oregon, also plots against it because of his political ambitions and his interest in the fur trade. Kit Carson, head scout, emerges as the honest man. The trials of the big trek, the personal clashes, and the course of true love fill the story. It all makes a rather readable but distinctly minor novel. A great many clichés of characterization and description are apparent, and one cannot fairly call the book any great contribution to the lore of the early West.

W. R. B.

RICOCHETS. By André Maurois. Harpers. 1937. $2.

These twenty-five stories, by the author of "Ariel," "Byron," and "Disraeli," are for the most part very brief, and bear upon the affairs between men and women from a distinctly Gallic point of view. They are ably translated by Hamish Miles. In one, to be sure, the English character of General Bramble, whom Maurois made famous in "The Silences of Colonel

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Bramble," reappears in the story of a Christmas haunting, and another story, whose setting is England, and which is one of the longer ones, presents the attractive, elderly character of Louisa, Lady Whitney. But the best are, perhaps, those brevities in which some irony of the interplay of sexes is neatly skewered upon a bit of expressive exposition. This is a slight book, often reminiscent of Maupassant's method. It will not serve to increase M. Maurois's reputation—rather, he seems to have entertained himself by imagining these situations as a respite from more serious work. In the original French they would probably seem to have even more point and pith.

W. R. B.

History

THE PASSING OF THE STEWARTS. By Agnes Mure Mackenzie. Macmillan. 1937. $3.75.

Miss Mackenzie's series of studies in Scottish history has now reached its fourth number, which undertakes to cover the period between 1625 and 1746. To it are added a few brief concluding paragraphs which carry the story of the Stewarts down to the death in 1807 of the last surviving direct claimant to the throne, Cardinal York. Like its predecessors this volume is in content accurate, scholarly, and justly reasoned. It untangles the difficult problems of sect and creed which constitute so important a part of seventeenth century history; it faces and elucidates the equally difficult matter of economic necessity as applied to the affairs of Stewart and Hanoverian England and Scotland. Its arguments are sound and its conclusions valuable, though not always lucidly expressed. But it attempts also to be a narrative, to tell the absorbing story of the first Charles's tragic mistakes, of Montrose's gallant sacrifices, of the second Charles's triumphant return and the second James's pathetic exile, and of those wildly romantic Jacobite upheavals that came with the Pretenders. Even with such seemingly unspoilable materials it fails to achieve any rapidity of motion. As a narrative it has the speed of a canal barge drawn by a meditative mule; and the reader is so bored with the snail-like monotony that he fails to notice how gloriously and dramatically enthralling is the country through which he is passing.

C. D. A.

Miscellaneous

RACE: A STUDY IN MODERN SUPERSTITION. By Jacques Barzun. Harcourt, Brace. 1937. $2.50.

The word "race" can scarcely be used without evoking violent controversy. On the one side it brings to mind the enthusiasts who believe in the "Nordic myth" and "Aryan fallacy," and on the other the "race levelers" who claim that there are no real races and no mental differences among great groups of people aside from those due to environment and training. Mr. Barzun's volume presents the viewpoint of the extreme race leveler. In his preface he says that "the present volume attempts to be a critical history of the idea of race in recent times." Its particular object is "to show how equally ill-founded are the commonplace and the learned views of race." Much of it is a truly admirable account of the way in which ideas about race have varied from one period to another, and of how race consciousness and race pride have ebbed and flowed according to political conditions.

If Barzun had limited himself to an historical account, his work would be of outstanding merit. Unfortunately, from the very start he adopts a superior tone as if he, and he alone, knew everything. He makes fun of early investigators. Even though he himself makes no original contribution to the problems of race, he is very scornful of the errors made by investigators during the past two centuries. He does not recognize that most of the mistakes were those of the times, not of the man. To cap the climax, when Barzun reaches the end of his book he does the very thing which he has been so scornful about in earlier pages. In an attempt to explain the diverse physical appearance of the various sections of mankind, he advances a theory which can be pricked as easily as a child's balloon. "Environment," he says, "is a complex of separate and obscure agents among which, owing to its direct connection with the adult body, diet seems to be the most important." Then he tells us that stature, coloring, and shape of skull all depend on diet. He leaves us with the impression that what we call race arises almost entirely from diet. He quite overlooks the fact that Negroes and whites who have had the same diet for generations—still produce children who are Negroes and whites from the start. It is a great pity that what might have been a fine book is so greatly marred by intolerance and self assertion.

E. H.

Music

WAGNER'S OPERAS. By Lawrence Gilman. Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.50.

The large audience of Wagner enthusiasts will welcome Mr. Gilman's book. It is not a guide for beginners—on the contrary, it assumes some acquaintance with the music dramas—but it is entirely readable and untechnical. The book, which proceeds on the simple plan of devoting a chapter to each of Wagner's operas, is not history but appreciative criticism. Facts are brought in when they bear upon the point to be made. Mr. Gilman is at his best in describing the changes made in "Tannhaüser" for the Paris version; in connecting "Tristan" with Wagner's enthusiasm for Oriental philosophy; in discussing Wagner's incredible achievement of dropping work on "The Ring" for fifteen years, during which he composed "Tristan" and "Meistersinger," then taking up the tetralogy where he left off. Every reader will find opinions to disagree with; the reviewer thinks, for instance, that Mr. Gilman overestimates Wagner's characterization of women, and frequently lets his general enthusiasm run away with him on points of detail. Also, Mr. Gilman uses a purple typewriter ribbon; he has an invariable habit of making two lush adjectives do the work of one. But it's a very good book; if the author overestimates certain aspects of Wagner, he does not overestimate Wagner, because—as he knows—it can't be done.

G. S.

Travel

CROSSROADS OF THE BUCCANEERS. By Hendrik de Leeuw. Lippincott. 1937. $3.

Mr. de Leeuw very sensibly feels that travelers to the West Indian islands can find their "sights," "views," and picturesque corners for themselves. What they are less likely to discover handily is a sifted history of each island such as he gives here. His knowledge is astounding. It cannot be doubted that he has digested the immense bibliography at the back of his book, or that he has traveled widely and well, for he has traced the progress of each island from the time of its aboriginal culture, through the periods of discovery, colonization, buccaneering, and economic experiment, to the present day. He has even gone further, to wonder, with Lothrop Stoddard, how long our tenancy will last in that black sea.

But it is a pretty dreary recital. Even his ethnological interest in the present inhabitants of the islands is little more illuminating than a good glance at the people themselves. The native Caribs, who once had two languages, for men and for women, the French Cha-Chas of St. Thomas, the Scotch Red Legs of Barbados, and the black Irish of Montserrat are all described; the interbred Europeans living in the crater of Saba come in for more discussion than they warrant, for Saba is not the "mystery island" Mr. de Leeuw assumes. It has been discovered by hundreds of tourists.

Still the book has definite value as supplementary reading to a Baedeker, and will have an audience among those who, for the sake of its solid content, can abide its language. A couple of clichés to a page are supportable, but when the author resorts to those in half a dozen foreign languages, prints them incorrectly, and then deigns to translate them, one is inclined to take his erudition *cum grano salis* (with a grain of salt).

H. D.

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Authors of the Week

Robert Nathan

Mr. Nathan has made a unique place for himself in American literature through his novels that display a lightly satirical fantasy. He is descended from the Rabbi Gershom Seixas, who came to this country in 1710, and who was one of the incorporators of Columbia College. He is the nephew of Maud Nathan who founded the Consumer's League, and of Annie Nathan Meyer, one of the founders of Barnard College. Born in New York City the day after New Year's in 1894, he was educated privately at several schools at home and abroad, and went from Exeter to Harvard. He first married in 1915, and a daughter, Joan Frederick, was born of that marriage. He has been twice married since. "Peter Kindred," his first novel, appeared in 1919, when he was temporarily working in an advertising agency. Since then he has devoted his time entirely to writing, save when he was a lecturer at the New York University School of Journalism in 1924-25. He admires "Don Quixote" of all books, is a devotee of Anatole France, and has a true musical gift. He is an excellent fencer, swimmer, and tennis player. A personal sketch of Robert Nathan, by Ben Ray Redman, was published in *The Saturday Review* of October 13, 1934.

"Winter in April," by Robert Nathan, is reviewed on page 5.

George Jean Nathan

One of America's most sophisticated and intelligent dramatic critics, George Jean Nathan has an international reputation. He has lived much of his bachelor existence in "a theatrically luxurious, if somewhat fusty, apartment on the top floor of a venerable apartment hotel on West Forty-fourth Street in New York." As co-editor with Henry L. Mencken, first of the famous old *Smart Set* (1914-1923) and then of the *American Mercury* in its former incarnation (1924-1930), he built up his reputation as dramatic critic, and has done other dramatic editing and contributing since for various magazines. He was born in Fort Wayne, Indiana, in 1882, got his A. B. in 1904 from Cornell, and spent a year in Italy at the University of Bologna. He was on the editorial staff of the *New York Herald* in 1905-6 and on several magazines in the next two years. He will always be young looking, dapper, entertaining, pleasant, always wearing a slight smile. He is a chain smoker, affecting long ivory cigarette holders. He does not care for politics, marriage, or bad plays, but denies that he is either a cynic or an iconoclast.

"The Morning After the First Night," by George Jean Nathan, is reviewed on page 11.

Robert Charles Benchley

This one of our leading humorists was born in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1889. He graduated from Harvard in the class of 1912. After graduation Benchley worked in the advertising department of the Curtis Publishing Company in Philadelphia, and then did industrial personnel work in Boston. He became associate editor of the *New York Tribune Sunday Magazine* and editor of the *New York Tribune Graphic*. During the war he was secretary of the Aircraft Board in Washington. Later he became managing editor of *Vanity Fair*, and then, successively, the conductor of a column on the old *New York World*, for nine years dramatic editor of *Life*, and finally dramatic critic of the *New Yorker*, from where he makes frequent trips to Hollywood. His first stage appearance was with the Music Box Revue in 1923-4, and he is now noted for the "shorts" he has made for the talkies, his radio work, and his participation in several prominent recent films. Benchley was married in 1914, and has two sons.

"After 1903—What?," by Robert Benchley, is reviewed on page 7.

C. P. Rodocanachi

An English-educated Greek from Alexandria, Mr. Rodocanachi is now in his sixties, and this is his first book. He calls himself "a curious mixture of the business man, the adventurer, and the intellectual." He has been called "Byzantine in a streamlined Near East." He plays polo and sails a yacht. Born in Egypt, he lived in England up to the age of seven, spent the years of his youth in Egypt, and finished his studies in Paris. He has fought in two revolutions and two major wars, has represented Greece in great diplomatic councils, and has made and lost fortunes in commerce. He was made the hero of H. N. Brailsford's novel, "The Broom of the War God." In his "First Athenian Memories," the English novelist Compton Mackenzie referred to him as "the handsome and dashing 'Tanty' Rodocanachi."

"Forever Ulysses," by C. P. Rodocanachi, is reviewed on page 5.

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Double-Crostics: No. 198

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

1-N	2-Y	3-S	4-C	5-W	6-U	7-G	■	8-E	■	9-B	10-G	11-A	■	12-Q	13-L
14-U	15-T	■	16-M	■	17-O	18-J	19-V	20-A	21-G	22-M	■	23-J	24-H	25-G	26-F
27-B	28-O	29-X	30-U	31-V	32-T	■	33-T	34-Q	35-V	■	36-G	37-T	38-N	39-P	■
40-E	41-V	■	42-E	43-U	44-Y	45-K	46-S	47-X	■	48-I	49-B	50-D	51-L	■	52-D
■	53-R	54-B	55-U	56-L	57-H	58-Y	59-Q	■	60-T	61-I	62-H	63-V	64-K	65-X	■
66-F	67-C	68-U	69-W	70-L	71-A	72-X	■	73-W	74-F	75-N	76-C	77-R	78-P	79-K	■
80-I	81-P	82-X	83-A	84-B	85-T	86-M	■	87-Y	88-P	89-T	90-N	91-G	92-S	93-K	■
94-G	95-U	■	96-E	97-V	■	98-O	99-R	100-M	101-N	102-D	■	103-D	104-T	■	105-Q
106-E	107-D	108-B	■	109-W	110-G	111-S	112-J	113-M	114-H	115-V	116-Y	■	117-V	118-R	■
119-O	120-C	121-R	122-M	123-H	124-Q	125-T	126-L	■	127-E	128-Q	129-J	130-M	■	131-R	132-M
■	133-J	134-Y	135-H	■	136-I	137-D	■	138-M	139-H	140-C	■	141-E	142-A	143-U	144-Y
■	145-I	146-E	147-F	■	148-E	149-L	150-A	■	151-D	152-V	153-Y	154-P	155-M	156-O	157-W
158-B	■	159-E	160-H	■	161-C	162-X	163-G	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 17 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Character in "As You Like It."

B. Famous Roman actor (d. B.C. 62).

C. In the same place (Lat.).

D. Early form of slide trombone.

E. Etymological study of place names.

F. Roman poet (B.C. 43-A.D. 17).

G. Part of Texas.

H. Frightful.

I. Shield, protection.

J. Abounding in information (colloq.).

K. Sense organs.

L. Civil War battle, April 1862.

M. One willing to compromise.

N. Devastation.

O. Gives vent to.

P. Kind of thread or fabric.

Q. Jehovah.

R. Fertile in dodges.

S. Frozen desserts.

T. Forced deprivation of money (slang).

U. Renegade.

V. English place made famous June 15, 1215.

W. Astray; erroneously.

X. Irritated by raillery.

Y. Mitigates.

WORDS

142 71 20 83 150 11

108 54 9 27 84 49 158

67 4 120 76 140 161

137 52 50 102 151 107 103

148 106 42 159 146 40 96 8 141 127

74 66 26 147

110 10 163 36 94 91 7 25 21

139 24 123 135 57 160 114 62

145 61 80 136 48

112 18 133 23 129

93 79 64 45

126 149 13 56 70 51

138 22 16 113 130 100 86 132 155 122

1 90 38 75 101

156 119 28 17 98

81 154 88 78 39

105 128 34 12 124 59

121 131 77 53 99 118

111 92 46 3

125 15 37 89 32 60 104 33 85

14 30 143 6 68 55 43 95

63 152 19 115 35 117 97 31 41

5 73 69 109 157

29 65 82 72 162 47

87 153 44 2 134 116 144 58

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The Amen Corner

"Still climbing trees in the Hesperides."
—Love's Labour's Lost.[1]

The Oxford University Press,[2] we are very pleased to observe, is still bringing out titles in the *Hesperides Series.*[3] The latest of the beautiful little volumes designed by Bruce Rogers in an edition of 500 copies (The others have gone like hot cakes. If you want one of these, we advise you confidentially to order it now.) is *The Poems of Thomas Gray,* edited by Austin Lane Poole. The text is that of the recent new edition in the *Oxford Standard Authors,*[4] slightly rearranged. *The Hesperides Series* takes its name from the first title, *The Poems of Robert Herrick,* in two volumes,[3] a good part of which, of course, consists of his volume known as *Hesperides,* or "Works Both Humane and Divine."

We seized this rather slight excuse for indulging in a little browsing in the newly published *Oxford Companion to Classical Literature,*[5] compiled, like the *Oxford Companion to English Literature,*[6] by Sir Paul Harvey. It says:

Hespe'rides, THE, 'Daughters of Evening,' in Greek mythology, were supposed to live far away in the west, near the Atlas mountains, guarding a tree that produced golden apples, a present given by Ge to Hera when the latter married Zeus. The dragon Lādōn helped them to keep watch. It was one of the Labours of Heracles (q.v.) to get possession of the apples. See also *Atalanta.*

But the next entry had already caught our eye:

He'sperus *(Hesperos),* the evening star.

The entry before is:

Hespe'ria, the 'Western Land,' a poetic name for Italy or Spain.

Alas! how times—or perhaps it is permissible in his context to say *Eheu! fugaces.*

Catalonia Infelix is the title of a new book by E. Allison Peers, author of *The Spanish Tragedy,*[7] which has caught our eye in the *Oxford Spring List.*[8] On the first page is the *Oxford Book of Greek Verse in Translation,*[9] which is now definitely ready for early publication. It is something more than a book of translations (we have looked at some advance sheets); it is a book of poetry. The first name in the Index of Translators is Richard Aldington. Looking down the list Blunden catches our eye; and Bridges, Browning, Samuel Butler, Byron, Cowper, Fielding, Gladstone, Housman, Lawrence of Arabia, Louis MacNiece, Shelley, Swinburne, Tennyson, Humbert Wolfe—

And here, for a New Year's Wish is Herrick's translation of an anonymous Greek poem,

"The Four Best Things"

Health is the first good lent to men;
A gentle disposition then:
Next, to be rich by no by-wayes;
Lastly, with friends t'enjoy our dayes.

The Oxonian.

(1) In the *Oxford Shakespeare,* $1.00. (2) 114 Fifth Avenue. (3) $2.50 a volume. (4) $1.50 each. Write for list. (5) $3.00. (6) $5.00. (7) $2.50. (8) Write for it. (9) $3.00.

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

Nocturne (Opus 3)

COFFEE disturbs digestion; it also acts
Strangely upon the nerves. You lie awake
Pondering the subtle rhythms of a snake,
Or vaguely wondering about the curious facts
Of life, until gaunt daylight renews its pacts
With birds and street-cars. Shuddering wagons quake
Past with a loose sound of early wheels, to break
The fast of dreamers with sturdier digestive tracts.

Oblivion threatens just as the morning glitters;
But the whole world now echoes with falling boxes:
There are no words for milk purveyors in any lexicon.
Come quickly, sleep, now as the last ashman twitters—
Close, eyelids, as a couple of lurking emerald foxes
Begin to chant deliciously, in Mexican.

Vincent Starrett.

☞In his preface to the World's Classics edition of *Selected Shelburne Essays* Paul Elmer More told how, after giving up his job as teacher at Bryn Mawr, he rented "a dilapidated little farmhouse" near Shelburne, N. H. There, for three summers and two winters, P. E. M. lived as a literary hermit, joined in summer by his brother Professor Louis More (now Dean of the Graduate School at the University of Cincinnati) and there the famous *Shelburne Essays* were begun. ☞During the summer just past, Dean More made pilgrimage—for the first time since he was there with his brother—to the little farmhouse, and was good enough to lend us a snapshot of it. ☞Paul Elmer More's last book is reviewed in this issue of the SRL., page 19.

☞We were heartily sorry to read of the death of Charles E. Lauriat, distinguished Boston bookseller, at the age of 62. He had directed Lauriat's well-known store since the death of his father, its founder, in 1920, and was in private an esteemed collector of prints and fine editions. It is well remembered that Mr. Lauriat was aboard the *Lusitania* when she was torpedoed and played a gallant part in the rescue of his fellow-passengers. ☞Among prominent members of the Trade who got their early training in Lauriat's bookstore are Fred Melcher, editor of *P.W.,* and Frank Henry of the J. B. Lippincott Company. ☞Speaking of Mr. Melcher, last week he delivered the first strike of the new Caldecott Medal to the A. L. A. at their conference in Chicago. ☞The Caldecott Medal for the most distinguished American picture book for children is to be awarded annually by the Children's and School Librarians Sections of the American Library Association. The medal is named

COTTAGE AT SHELBURNE, N. H.
ONCE OCCUPIED BY P. E. MORE

for Randolph Caldecott who began a new era in picture books about seventy-five years ago. ☞The medal will be struck in bronze each year and will be presented to the artist who has given us the best picture book of the year. It will be awarded simultaneously with the John Newbery Medal, now in its seventeenth year, which is given to the author of the most distinguished book for children published during the preceding year. The same book cannot compete for both medals. ☞The Caldecott medal has been designed by René Chambellan, a New York sculptor who has done many of the distinguished medals of recent years, including the Newbery Medal.

☞*The Pleasures of Publishing* (Columbia University Press's sprightly hebdomad) with its usual alertness is first to spot an amusing printer's error in the index of the new *Bartlett*—where a quote (from Nietzsche) about people "flocking to communion" is indexed as "flocking to communism." ☞We liked Geraldine Gordon's New Year greeting from her Hathaway House Bookshop at Wellesley: "The relationship betwen bookbuyer and bookseller is unique, for we know that we deal in intangibles, and the wares we offer often carry magic properties." ☞We like Edward Kasner's story (in a lecture reprinted in *Scripta Mathematica*) of the Russian peasant who came to Moscow for the first time and saw the giraffes at the Zoo. He said: "Look what the Bolsheviks have done to our horses." ☞As an amateur Chaucerian Old Q. was excited to learn (in a Christmas greeting from E. P. Kuhl of Iowa City) that there is preserved at Rugby, Tennessee, a baluster from the gallery of the ancient Tabard Inn—though not the original Tabard, which was burned about 1670. This relic is from the *second* Tabard Inn, which was demolished in the 1870's. ☞The present inn at Rugby, Tenn., is dedicated to the memory of Chaucer; and the town of Rugby is so called because that region was settled by a group of Englishmen among whom Thomas Hughes (the author of *Tom Brown*) was a moving spirit.

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